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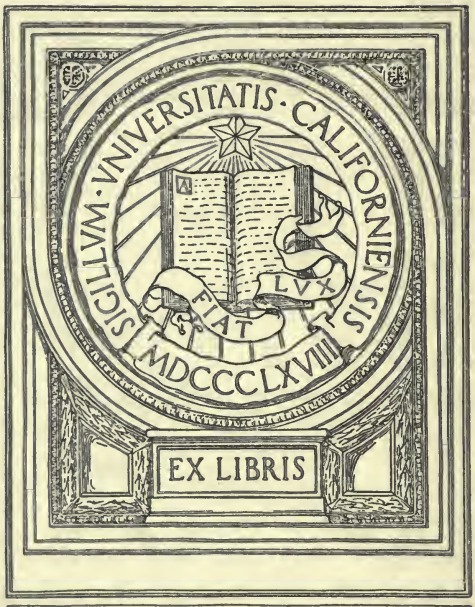
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The PERFECT LIFE

BY

E. A. STURGE

AUTHOR OF NATURE'S TEACHINGS,
THE SPIRIT OF JAPAN, ETC.

985

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PREFACE

IN this little volume the author has endeavored to put in rhythmic form—which does not mean poetry—the wonderful life and teachings of Jesus from his birth to his ascension. In order to do this, it has been necessary to make considerable alteration both in the words and in their arrangement as found in our English versions of The Gospel Story, without changing the meaning of the Master's matchless message.

The purpose of this narrative in blank verse is to make the most perfect life ever lived attractive to some who are not interested in it in the form in which it is usually presented.

E. A. STURGE.

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THE PERFECT LIFE

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

O Bethlehem, a charm is in thy name!
Thy fields did Ruth, the Moabitess, glean;
And here the poet, David, had his home.
Upon these very hills he watched his sheep,
And sang of the great shepherd of our souls,
While living close to nature and to God.

From yonder well beside the village gate
He quenched his thirst, and drank no sweeter draught
From golden goblet when he was a king.
But we would tell of David's greater Son,
Who honored Bethlehem by being born
Within her walls. The house of bread indeed!

One night upon this sea of rolling hills
A glory broke, which changed them all to gold,
And made a band of drowsy shepherds think
The dawn had come some hours before its time.
They raised their startled eyes to find the sky
Aglow with splendor from the spirit world.

One glorious from out the glory came,
And nearer drew until those shepherds heard
In speech seraphic: "Do not be afraid!
Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy;
For unto you is born in David's town
A Saviour, who is Jesus Christ, the Lord."

"And for a sign by which to know the child,
You may behold him wrapped in swaddling bands,
And lying in a lowly manger bed."
Then while the shepherds wondered at the news,
The sweetest message ever brought to earth,
A transformation scene was taking place.

No longer was the messenger alone,
But now supported by an angel host,
They sang in chorus such as never man
On earth before had heard, ascribing praise
And glory to the Highest, who had shown
Good will to men, in giving thus his Son.

The shepherds left their flocks, and came in haste
To Bethlehem, and searching, found the child
Just as the angel said, and worshiped him.
They to the people told their wondrous tale,
Which seemed to most of them an idle dream.
So far they were from Jesus, though so near.

A week passed by, and then the mother gave
The precious name of Jesus to her son,
Because he was to save us from our sins.
A hundred other names would suit him well,
But none so fitting as the one which tells
The reason why he lived and died for men.

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE

Then after this a month or more passed by,
Until the day appointed by the law
Arrived; and then the grateful mother brought
Her son with humble offering of doves;
And in the temple at Jerusalem
Presented her first-born before the Lord.

Old Simeon, a saint and prophet, came,
And taking Jesus in his trembling arms,
Gave thanks to God, and said: "Now let me die,
Since thy salvation I have lived to see,
A light to lighten Gentiles, and to be
The glory of thy people Israel!"

Then while the mother wondered at these words,
The prophet cried: "Behold, this child is set
Both for the fall and lifting up again
Of many of the sons of Israel!
A sign refused! A sword shall pierce thy soul,
That thoughts of many hearts may be revealed!"

Then Anna, an old servant of the Lord,
Who in devotion spent her days and nights,
That instant coming in, gave thanks to God,
And spoke of Jesus to the faithful ones
Who in the city of Jerusalem
Where waiting for redemption from on high.

THE VISIT OF THE MAGI

'Twas after this some wise men from the East
Across the desert came, to seek the king
New born among the Jews; for they had seen
In their own country what appeared a star,
Which meant to them the coming of a light
Surpassing any that the world had known.

These strangers having reached Jerusalem,
Inquired of many where the new-born king
Might be; for they had traveled far to find
And worship him. But no one seemed to know
His whereabouts, though but six miles away.
So near they were to Jesus, yet so far.

When Herod heard of their peculiar quest,
He called together leading priests and scribes,
And asked them where Messiah should be born.
They answered readily, "In Bethlehem;"
For so the Scriptures taught. Though knowing this
They did not go to seek the Saviour there.

The crafty king then asked the strangers when
They saw the star, and then to Bethlehem
He bade them go, and diligently to seek
Until they found the child, then bring him word,
That he himself might also worship him.
Thus Herod thought to cover his design.

The Magi then set out for Bethlehem.
A light which God provides for seeking souls
Before them moved, to guide them on their way.
This light, which to their eyes appeared a star,
May have been inward, and unseen by all
Except this band of pilgrims seeking Christ.

With joy unspeakable they saw again
The star they first beheld in their own land.
It certainly was not like stars we know,
For like a lantern luminous it hung
Above the house that sheltered him they sought,
And marked the lowly dwelling of our Lord.

They found a babe requiring mother's care,
Yet saw in him the universal King,
And worshiped him, presenting costly gifts
Of gold, and fragrant frankincense, and myrrh,
Providing for his exile and the needs
Of those who were to share the same with him.

Thus shepherd Jews and wise men from the East,
The poor and rich, the ignorant and learned,
Both Jews and Gentiles, types of every race
And class were to the infant Saviour led;
A prophecy of days that were to come,
When all the world should seek and worship him.

The Magi in a vision of the night
Were warned by God of Herod's wicked plan;
And so avoiding Jerusalem,
They to their land returned another way,
To tell the story to their countrymen
Of how they sought and found the coming King.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

While Mary pondered what this quest might mean,
An angel said to Joseph in a dream:
"Arise, and with the child and mother flee
To Egypt, and continue there till I
Shall bring thee word; for Herod soon will seek
The child, that he may take away his life."

Then he arose, and quickly in the night
With Mary and her infant son set out
To seek a hiding place beside the Nile,
And gaze upon those hated pyramids,
And think of what his people suffered there,
When like himself in exile in that land.

King Herod, seeing that he had been mocked
By those he thought had fallen in his trap,
Dispatched his agents, to make way with all
The baby boys they found in Bethlehem.
All under two were slain for Jesus' sake;
The first of many lives laid down for him.

The cruel king soon died. Then in a dream
The angel spoke to Joseph once again,
And bade him to his native land return.
He did so, passing by loved Bethlehem—
Because too near to Herod's reigning son—
To dwell in Nazareth of Galilee.

THE CHILDHOOD OF JESUS

Within that quiet and secluded nest,
Surrounded by the everlasting hills,
A town not mentioned in the Sacred Scrolls,
And out of which had come no famous man,
Our Saviour lived for nearly thirty years
A simple and an uneventful life.

He grew in stature like all other boys,
And also gained in knowledge day by day,
He grew in Spirit and in favor, too,
With all who knew him, being always kind,
And helpful, and obedient, and true,
Developing the perfect three-fold life.

No doubt in childhood often to the well
At eventide he with his mother went.
He doubtless played with fragrant bits of wood
That fell upon the floor of Joseph's shop.
And without doubt he studied in the school
Belonging to the village synagogue.

And often when his childish tasks were done,
He climbed the hills behind the little town,
And gazed with admiration on the scene
Of beauty that unfolded to his view
Of lake, and mountain, and of quiet vales,
With fields, and orchards, and abodes of men.

He caught a glimpse of the great western sea,
And Lebanon, a giant clothed in white,
And Hermon crowned with everlasting snow,
And lesser heights like Tabor near at hand,
While Cana, Nain, and other villages
Were sheltered in the valleys at his feet.

How must the heart of Jesus have been thrilled
By all the beauty of the Holy Land,
And all its sacred history! Did he
Not turn his eyes from nature up to God
And talk with Him, and so in wisdom grow,
And knowledge such as is not learned in schools?

THE FIRST PASSOVER

Each year at Passover his parents went
Together to the Holy City, where
They kept the sacred feast. When Jesus reached
The age of twelve, and was responsible—
For boys at twelve were subject to the law—
They took him with them to Jersualem.

'Twas spring-time, with the country at its best,
All carpeted with grass and early bloom.
Avoiding Samaria, they passed
Across the Jordan to the eastern shore,
Then southward over many battlefields,
To ford the river near by Jericho.

The days of travel and the changing scenes,
The company of friends, the evening camp,
The songs of praise by pilgrim as they marched
All thrilled his soul, but most of all the sight,
Which burst upon his vision as they neared
Their destination, famed Jerusalem.

The temple service and the paschal lamb,
That emblem of himself; what were his thoughts
When celebrating this first Passover?
The temple school by famous rabbis taught,
And open to the pilgrims, had for him
Attractions greater than all else beside.

So when the time for going home arrived,
He tarried, while the others went their way;
And sitting mid the doctors of the law,
He listened to their teaching, and surprised
His teachers by his questions and replies,
Which showed a knowledge deep of sacred things.

The company of relatives and friends
With which he came, were on their homeward way,
Supposing Jesus to be in the band,
Until they halted for the evening camp,
Which shows the confidence they had in him,
And of his little need of oversight.

But Mary, filled with deep solicitude,
Assisted by her husband, sought in vain
For Jesus through the halting caravan;
So back they went, and after three days search,
They found him seated in the temple school
Among the noted doctors of the law.

Then Mary said: "Son, wherefore hast thou dealt
With us this way? Thy father and myself
With anxious hearts have sought thee sorrowing!"
But Jesus answered, "Wherefore have ye sought?
For know ye not the time has come, when I
Must be about my Father's business?"

It seems that even at that early age
He knew of his divine relationship;
And yet, returning to the sleepy town
Of Nazareth, for eighteen weary years
With hammer, saw, and other common tools
He plied the humble trade of carpenter.

But this was just as much his Father's work
As were the deeds he did in later years,
In healing lepers, stilling stormy seas,
And calling forth the dead to live again.
He worked, and waited patiently his time,
Few dreaming of the fame that should be his.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

When thirty summers o'er his head had passed,
A mighty preacher, one who claimed to be
Forerunner of the Christ, from out the wild
Appeared, and stirred the nation to its depths;
Commanding all the people to prepare
A highway for Messiah soon to come.

This stern ascetic, clothed in camel's hair
And leathern girdle, simple in his life,
Avoided the cities; but the folk
From every part went out to hear his words,
And ask what they should do to be prepared
To meet the coming king of righteousness.

He likened those who came to him to trees,
Which must the fruits of righteousness produce,
And not contented be with pedigrees.
The ax, he said, was lying near the roots,
A fearful warning to all fruitless ones,
Of what, without repentance, soon might come.

"With water I baptize; but he who comes
Is mightier than I, so that to bear
His shoes is too exalted work for me.
He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost
And purifying flame. With fan in hand
He stands to winnow clean his threshing-floor."

When multitudes in Jordan were baptized,
Confessing sins, the Saviour also came,
Requesting for himself this sacrament;
But John, who knew his purity replied:
"'Tis fitting I should be baptized of thee!"
Though finally he granted his request.

Then as the ceremony was performed,
And as the Saviour prayed, the Baptist saw
The Spirit in the from of gentle dove
Descend, and rest on Jesus; and he heard
These words from heaven spoken: "This is my
Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

CHRIST'S TEMPTATION

Then to the desert, by the Spirit led,
Went Jesus, to be forty days alone
With God, that he might know his Father's will,
And so accomplish that for which he came.
He in the Spirit lived those two score days,
Forgetful of the body and its needs.

He nothing of the sense of hunger knew
While in this ecstasy, but when it passed,
And was by weakness and by gnawing pain
Replaced, this was the the tempter's chosen time
To whisper, "If thou be the Son of God,
Command these desert stones to change to bread."

Was he to perish in that lonely place?
To die of hunger, when he knew that he
Could by a word turn flinty rocks to bread?
But as his Father gave him no command
To do this thing, he said: "Man shall not live
By bread alone, but by each word of God."

Then came the question, how begin the work
Which lay before him? How attract the throng?
If he should from the temple pinnacle
Descend among the people, would they not
Receive him as a messenger divine?
What said the Word of God concerning this?

Was it not written in a certain Psalm:
"His angels shall be given charge of thee,
That they may bear thee upwards in their hands,
Lest thou shouldst dash thy foot against a stone?"
But would that not be tempting Providence?
He said, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

And then before the mind of Christ was spread
The glory of all principalities.
The tempter whispered, "All this majesty
Will I bestow on thee, for it is mine
To give to whom I will; but worship me,
And all of this dominion shall be thine."

The last suggestion, that he should exchange
The bitter cross for earthly empire, seems
To have revealed the scource from which it came.
Then cried the Saviour, "Satan, get thee hence!
'Tis written thou shalt serve the Lord thy God,
And adoration give to Him alone."

Then for a time the tempter left our Lord,
And angels came instead to strengthen him.
The Saviour with the Holy Spirit filled
To Galilee returned, and once again
He joined the crowd, that waited for the words
That from the lips of John the Baptist fell.

THE FIRST DISCIPLES CALLED

The Baptist seeing Jesus as he walked
In meditation by the riverside,
Aloud exclaimed: "Behold the Lamb of God,
Which taketh the world's wickedness away!
I saw the Spirit like a dove descend
Upon him, so I know that this is he."

When two of John's disciples heard these words,
They followed Jesus, asking where he dwelt.
He bade then come and see, and this they did,
Remaining with him till the close of day.
The name of one was Andrew, one was John;
And later both were called to follow him.

This Andrew had a brother, Simon, who
Was surnamed Peter by our blessëd Lord.
So Andrew finding first his brother, said:
"We have Messias found who is the Christ!"
He brought him to the Saviour, that he might
Himself behold him, and so be convinced.

The next day, Jesus, finding Philip, bade
Him follow: He obeyed, and later sought
Nathanael, telling him that they had found
The one by prophets and the Law foretold.
Nathanael doubted whether aught of good
Could come from such a town as Nazareth.

But he was brought to Jesus, and believed.
'Twas in this way the little stream began,
Which should increase and ever larger grow,
Till like a mighty river it should flow
Around the world and into every land,
To cleanse, and beautify, and save them all.

THE FIRST MIRACLE

It may have been the third day after that
Great day, when John and Andrew met their Lord—
A day which neither of them could forget—
There was a marriage in the little town
Of Cana, which was near to Nazareth,
Which Christ attended with his followers.

The wedding feast continued many days;
And in this humble home of slender means,
Refreshment insufficient was prepared;
So Jesus' mother told him privately,
The wine was gone. Perhaps this was a hint
That he and his disciples should retire.

She may have thought that Jesus would suggest
A remedy in this perplexing case.
Most likely, knowing of his wondrous birth,
She thought he might a miracle perform.
He could not take instructions now from her,
But patiently he must abide his time.

A moment more and Jesus' time had come.
The clock of destiny had struck the hour.
He knew his Father's will, so gave command
To fill six water-pots up to the brim
With water. Then he bade them draw it out,
And carry to the ruler of the feast.

'Twas tasted, and pronounced the best of wine.
None but the helpers of our Saviour knew
From whence it came. We are distinctly told
That this was first of all his miracles;
And by it he was glorified, and those
Who followed him were strengthened in their faith.

THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

Soon after this, at time of Passover,
The Master visited Jerusalem,
And saw within the holy temple courts
Those selling oxen, sheep, and lambs, and doves,
And money changers sitting by their stands,
Providing shekels for the worshipers.

His indignation kindled at the sight.
He made a whip of cords, and drove than out;
And overthrew the money-changers' stands,
And cried, "Away with these! Forbear to make
My Father's house a place of merchandise!"
The traders yielded, knowing he was right.

But when some questioned his authority
To do such things, and asked of him a sign
To prove himself to be the one foretold,
Who suddenly should to his temple come,
The Master said: "Destroy this house of God,
And in three days I'll raise it up again."

The people answered: "Six and forty years
Were needed to erect this temple here,
And wilt thou rear it up in three short days?"
But Jesus meant his body was the house
In which the Father dwelt. They would destroy
That temple, which he would restore again.

Then many people of Jerusalem
Beholding wonders that he did, believed;
But Jesus did not trust himself to them,
For knowing all men's hearts, he knew their faith
Would not endure more than a little while,
Then perish like the seed in shallow soil.

THE VISIT OF NICODEMUS

'Twas at this time a ruler of the Jews
Named Nicodemus came to him by night—
Perhaps because he feared his countrymen—
And said: "We know thou art a teacher come
From God, for none could do such miracles
As those performed by thee, without his help."

But Jesus answered, "Verily I say,
Except a man be born a second time,
He cannot see the kingdom of the Lord."
Then Nicodemus asked, "How can a man
When he is old another birth obtain?
Can he become a little child again?"

The Master answered, "Verily I say,
One must be born of Spirit from above.
That which is born of flesh is only flesh.
That which is born of Spirit, spirit is.
Regard it not as marvelous when I
Inform you that you must be born again."

"The Spirit may be likened to the wind,
Which bloweth where it will; though thou canst hear
The sound thereof, thou canst not tell the place
From whence it comes, or whither it will go.
And thus it is with every person born
To higher life by means of breath divine."

The puzzled man exclaimed, "How can this be!"
The Christ replied, "Art thou of Israel
A master, and yet knowest not these things?
We speak concerning matters we have seen,
And testify about the things we know,
Yet ye will not receive our evidence."

"As Moses lifted up upon a pole
The brazen serpent in the wilderness,
So must the Son of man be lifted up,
That whosever will believe in him
Shall never perish, but shall be possessed
Of life that will endure eternally."

"For God so loved the world, that he bestowed
His only Son, that whosoever should
Believe in him should never perish, but
Should have possession of eternal life.
God sent his Son not to condemn the world,
But that the world might be through him redeemed."

"And this is condemnation. Light has come,
But men prefer the darkness to the same;
For every one that doeth evil hates
The light, and keeps away, for fear his deeds
Should be reproved. But he that doeth right
Will come to prove his deeds are wrought in God."

These gospel seeds sown by the Master's hand
Within a soul responsive bore rich fruit
In after years. For when the chosen twelve
At last forsook the Master, this man came,
To show with Joseph how he loved the one,
Who gave himself to save a sinful world.

THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

On going back to Galilee again,
The Saviour traveled through Samaria.
At noontide coming near to Sychar, where
There was a deep and very ancient well—
Which Jacob gave to Joseph with a field—
The weary Master sat upon the curb.

A woman from the town came out to draw
Some water. Jesus asked her for a drink.
The woman said, "How is it thou, a Jew,
Dost ask a drink from a Samaritan?"
(For at that time the Hebrews as a race
Would have no dealings with these foreigners.)

The Master answered, "If to thee was known
The gift of God, and who it is that says:
'Give me a drink,' thou wouldst have asked of him,
And he would living water give to thee."
She answered, "Sir, thou nothing hast to draw
The water with, besides this well is deep;"

"From whence then will this living water come?
Art thou a greater man than Jacob was,
Who gave to us this well, and from it drank,
As did his children and his cattle, too?"
The Master answered, "Whosoever drinks
This water will soon thirsty be again;"

"But he who drinks the water I will give
Shall never thirst, for it will be in him
A well of living water springing up
To everlasting life." The woman said:
"This water give me, that I thirst no more,
And need no longer hither come to draw."

Then Jesus touched her conscience as he said:
"Go call thy husband, and together come."
The woman answered: "Husband have I none."
The Christ replied: "In this thou hast well said.
Thou hast had five, and he whom thou now hast
Is not thy husband. Thou hast told the truth."

The woman then remarked: "Sir, I perceive
Thou art a prophet. On the mountain near
Our fathers worshiped, but thy people say
The place to worship is Jerusalem."
But Jesus answered her: "The hour will come
When they shall worship God in neither place."

"Salvation cometh out of Israel.
The hour will come when all true worshipers
Shall worship God in spirit and in truth.
The Father seeketh such to worship him.
For God is Spirit; those who him adore,
Must worship him in spirit and in truth."

The woman said, "We know that Christ will come,
And he will tell us all we need to know."
Then Jesus answered, "I that speak to thee
Am he." Just then his followers returned
With food which they had purchased in the town.
They were surprised that Jesus talked with her.

The woman left her waterpot, and back
She hastened to the city, there to bid
Them come and see the man who told her all
She ever did. She asked, "Is this not Christ?"
Then from the city gate there poured a stream
Of thirsty souls, to drink at Jacob's well.

When asked by his disciples to partake
Of food, he answered: "I have meat to eat
Of which ye nothing know." They therefore asked
If any one had brought him any food.
The Master said, "It is my meat to do
His will that sent me, and complete His work."

"No need to say, 'Four months until the time
When harvest shall be gathered.' Lift your eyes,
The fields are even now for harvest white;
And he that reapeth shall receive reward,
And gather fruit into eternal life,
Where he that sows shall share the reaper's joy."

When the Samaritans were come to him,
They urged him to remain. Then for two days
He sowed the seed of truth in many hearts.
Then said they to the woman, "We believe
Not for thy saying, we ourselves have heard,
And know he is the Saviour of the world."

The Master then returned to Galilee,
Where he was gladly welcomed. Some of them
Had seen his doings at Jerusalem,
When they were present at the Passover.
They looked upon this prophet as their own,
And gloried in the wonders he performed.

THE NOBLEMAN'S SON HEALED

Then Jesus went once more to Cana, where
He had transformed the water into wine.
A nobleman whose son was near to death,
On learning he was there, came hastily,
To ask that Jesus to Capernaum
Return with him, and heal his dying child.

The Saviour said, "Unless ye should behold
Some sign or wonder, ye will not believe."
The nobleman replied, "Sir, I beseech
Thee come, before my boy shall pass away!"
Then said the Master, "Go, thy son shall live."
The nobleman believed, and went his way.

As he approached his home, his servants came,
To bring him joyful tidings of his boy.
The father asked: "What time did he begin
To make improvement?" Then they answered him:
"The fever left him yesterday at one."
The hour that Jesus said: "Thy son shall live."

This nobleman believed with all his house.
Affliction in this instance was the means
Of bringing all the family to Christ.
This was the second miracle performed
In Galilee, and helped to spread the fame
Of Jesus in the country round about.

The Saviour coming to Capernaum,
Began to teach in Jewish synagogues
Upon the Sabbath days, amazing all
Both by his doctrine and the mighty deeds,
Which frequently accompanied his words,
To prove the messenger's authority.

AN EVIL SPIRIT IS CAST OUT

As he was teaching on the Sabbath day,
An enemy of truth in human form,
A man possessed cried out: "Let us alone,
Thou Jesus from the town of Nazareth!
Is it for our destruction thou hast come?
We know thou art the holy one of God."

Rebuking him, the Master bade him hold
His peace, and then he quickly freed the man
From influence satanic which controlled
His life, and so the captive he released.
This deed increased the wonder-worker's fame,
Which spread from tongue to tongue on every side.

PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW HEALED

'Twas noon. The sun was shining on the lake,
Which seemed deserted on that sacred day.
The fishing craft were moored along the shore.
A holy silence brooded over all.
The only sound was caused by gentle waves,
Which kissed the sands and pebbles on the beach.

In Peter's humble cottage by the sea
The mother of the fisher's wife was stretched
Upon her pallet, for within her veins
The fever raged, the dread malaria.
She cared not now for lovely scenery,
And Sabbath stillness brought her no repose.

The service over in the synagogue,
The Master to this lowly cottage came.
Some told him of the sufferer who lay
In misery in an adjoining room;
And doubtless some suggested that she wait
For healing till the Sabbath sun should set.

But Jesus hastened to the couch of pain,
And bending o'er it, took the fevered hand.
How hot it was, and how the pulses throbbed!
How weak her body, and how dull her mind!
Then in a moment—wonderful the change!—
Her eyes were opened, to behold the Christ.

The sun was shining on the sapphire lake.
Why was she lying there? She had awaked
As from a horrid dream. All ache was gone,
And she was strong as she had been before
This illness had attacked her. She arose,
To serve the Master and his followers.

That evening when the sun had sunk to rest,
And painted all the sky with colors bright,
The holy Sabbath o'er, the people brought
Their sick ones to the cottage, where the Christ
Restored them all, and sent them home in peace.
O, what a record of a day well spent!

His rest was short, for long before the sun
He rose, and sought a lonely place to pray.
There Peter and the others finding him,
They said, to hold him: "All are seeking thee."
But Jesus answered: "I must go and preach
In other towns, my mission to fulfill."

Through Galilee he went to preach the word,
Returning to Capernaum, he made
That place the center of his ministries,
Performing there so many mighty deeds,
That people came from far and near to see
His miracles, and hear the word of God.

JESUS VISITS NAZARETH

To Nazareth, his former home he came,
And on the Sabbath, as his custom was,
He went into the Synagogue, and stood
To read the holy Scripture for the day.
Isaiah's prophesy was handed him.
Unrolling it, he found where it was said:

"Upon me is the Spirit of the Lord.
Because he hath anointed me to preach
The gospel to the poor, and sent me forth
To heal the broken hearted, and proclaim
Deliverance to captives, sight to give
To blind, and set at liberty the bound."

"And preach the year accepted of the Lord."
He rolled the manuscript, and sitting down,
He said: "Today this Scripture is fulfilled."
And all who listened to his gracious words
Were filled with wonder, asking in surprise:
"Is not this Joseph's son, the carpenter?"

So, knowing that a prophet will receive
But little honor in his native land,
He said: "This proverb you apply to me:
'Physician, heal thyself! What we have heard
About thy doings in Capernaum,
The same for people of thy town perform.' "

"Though many widows were in Israel,
Elijah was not sent to one of these,
But to a stranger, a Sidonian.
Among the Hebrews in Elisha's time
Were many lepers, but a Syrian
Alone of all the multitude was healed."

On hearing this, they were consumed with wrath.
Then all within the synagogue arose,
And led him to a precipice near which
The town was built, to cast him headlong down;
But through some influence which he possessed,
He from their midst escaped, and went his way.

A MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES

One day as Jesus stood beside the lake,
The people in their eagerness to hear
The famous preacher, close about him pressed.
A fishing boat was drawn upon the beach;
'Twas Peter's, and the Master entered it,
And bade the owner thrust out from the shore.

From this rude pulpit Jesus taught the throng;
And after he had ended his discourse,
He said to Peter: "Launch out in the deep,
And let your net be lowered for a draught."
Then Peter answered: "Master we have toiled
All night, and have not taken anything."

"But at thy word I will let down the net."
He did so, and the meshes soon enclosed
So many fishes, that the little smack
Could not contain them all. Then beckoning
His partners, who were in another boat,
They helped him reap the harvest of the deep.

When Peter saw what had been taken, he
Astonished fell at Jesus' knees, and cried:
"Depart, O Lord, from me a sinful man!"
But Jesus answered: "Do not be afraid!
From henceforth I will teach you to catch men."
Then they abandoned all, to follow him.

THE LEPER CLEANSED

Soon after this a leper came to him,
And worshiped at his feet. He should have stood
Far off, and cried: "Unclean! Unclean! Unclean!"
Such was the law; but this man boldly came
And said: "Lord, if thou wilt, I know you can
Remove this foul disease, and make me clean."

The Savior said, "I will. Be clean!" And then
He laid his hand on him whom others shunned,
And he was cleansed at once. The Master bade
Him tell no man of this, but seek the priests,
And offer for his restoration gifts
Which Moses had commanded in the Law.

Instead, he published everywhere his cure,
Which caused afflicted ones in multitudes
To seek the Christ, and so to interfere
With more important work of preaching, that
He could not enter in the larger towns,
But taught in desert places all who came.

A PARALYTIC HEALED

Again returning to Capernaum,
'Twas known that he was in a certain house.
The people gathered in such multitudes,
There was no way by which to reach the door.
This was the state of things when four men brought
A paralytic, that he might be healed.

Unable to approach him for the throng,
They climbed upon the roof, removed the tiles,
Then lowered both the mattress and the man
To where the Master stood. He saw their faith,
And said: "Thy sins are all forgiven, son!"
Which caused surprise to many who were there.

They rightly judged, that no one could forgive
The sins of men except almighty God.
Some therefore thought, "He speaketh blasphemies."
But Jesus read their minds, and said to them:
"Which is the easier to say, Thy sins
Forgiven are, or take thy bed and walk?"

"That ye may know the Son of man on earth
Hath power to forgive the sins of men,"
He to the palsied patient said, "Arise,
And take thy bed, and to thy house return!"
Restored in soul and body, he obeyed,
All giving praise and glory unto God.

Forgiving this man's sins might well include
The lesser boon of making whole again
The frame, which was the dwelling of the soul.
No other in that multitude it seems
Requested that the Saviour take away
His guilt, though this was Christ's prerogative.

MATTHEW CALLED

The tax collector, Matthew, one dispised
By Jews, and with himself but ill at ease,
Was sitting in the custom house one day,
When Jesus called him, saying: "Follow me!"
And gladly he obeyed the Lord's command,
Relinquishing all things to follow him.

To celebrate this great event, he gave
A dinner to which other publicans
And sinners were invited. Jesus came,
(To the disgust of many pious Jews)
And sat among those so-called sinful men.
How foreign to their notions of the Christ!

Some questioned his disciples, why their Lord
Would eat and drink with people of this kind.
He answered for himself: "It is the sick
And not the well who need the doctor's aid.
I came to call the sinners to repent,
And not the righteous who require it not."

They asked why John's disciples fasted oft,
While those of Jesus freely ate and drank.
He answered, "While the bridegroom is with them,
The bridegroom's comrades cannot mourn and fast;
But when the time of separation comes,
The days of fasting also shall be theirs."

He spoke this parable: "No man will patch
With new material a garment old;
The new is stronger, and would make a rent.
And no one into ancient bottles puts
The new made vintage, for the skins would break,
And both the wine and bottles would be lost."

THE MASTER AND THE SABBATH

Through golden wheat fields on one Sabbath day
The Master with his few disciples walked.
The latter being hungry, plucked the ears,
And rubbed them in their hands, to free the grain
Of chaff, thus fitting it for nourishment.
Some Pharisees who witnessed this found fault.

They thought it strange that Jews should violate
The holy day by actions such as these.
Then Jesus coming to their succor, told
How David in his time of need had gone,
And taken bread intended for the use
Of priests alone from out the sacred tent.

He showed that priests, in order to perform
Their duties, labored on the Sabbath days,
And yet were blameless. Furthermore he said,
"The Son of man is of the Sabbath Lord.
The Sabbath was provided for the good
Of man, and not man for the Sabbath day."

THE WITHERED HAND RESTORED ON THE SABBATH

Another Sabbath in the synagogue
There was a man with withered, useless hand.
The Scribes and Pharisees were keeping watch
To see if Christ would heal upon that day.
He knew their thoughts, and to the cripple said:
"Arise and stand before the audience!"

Then Jesus put this question to them all:
"What work is lawful on the Sabbath days?
To save or kill? To good or evil do?"
They answered not, and so the Saviour said:
"Extend thy hand!" The man at once obeyed,
And had the uses of the limb restored.

Then many who were in that synagogue
Were filled with wrath, and turned against the Lord.
This freeing of the Sabbath from the rules
By human beings made offended them.
Yet Jesus in no sense annulled the law,
But rather he fulfilled it perfectly.

THE TWELVE APOSTLES CHOSEN

Then Jesus after spending all the night
Communing with his Father in the mount,
Selected twelve from all his followers,
Ordaining them to the apostleship.
Their names were Simon Peter, Andrew, and
Bartholomew, and Philip, James and John.

The publican called Matthew, Thomas, James
The son of Alpheus, and Simon called
Zelotes, also Jude and Judas, who
Was called the traitor, for he sold his Lord.
Then Jesus to the plain descending, gave
The discourse called the Sermon on the Mount.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

"The poor in spirit blessëd are,
For heaven's kingdom they possess,"
"And those that mourn are blessëd, for
To them shall consolation come."

"The meek are likewise blessëd, for
The earth shall be their heritage."

"The hungry after righteousness
Are blessëd, for they shall be filled."

"The merciful are blessëd, for
They also mercy shall receive."

"The pure in heart are blessëd, for
"They shall the face of God behold."

"The peace-makers are blessëd, for
They shall be called the sons of God."

"The sufferers for righteousness
Are blessëd, theirs the kingdom is."

"And ye are blessëd when for me
You shall be evil spoken of;
Rejoice and be exceeding glad,
For great is your reward above."

"Ye are the salt of earth, but if
The salt shall lose its quality
Of saltness, it is fit for naught,
But to be trodden under foot."

"And of the world ye are the light.
A city built upon a hill
Cannot be hid. Men do not hide
A candle underneath a bed."

"Exalted on a candlestick,
It lightens all. So let your light
Before men shine, that they may see
Your works, and glorify your God."

"I came not to destroy the law
Or prophets, but to make complete.
One jot or tittle shall not pass
Away, till all shall be fulfilled."

"He who shall these commandments break,
And teach men so, shall be the least;
But he who does and teaches them
Shall greatest in the kingdom be."

"Except your righteousness exceed
That of the scribes and Pharisees,
Ye shall in no case be received
Within the kingdom of the Lord."

"It hath been said by men of old:
'Thou shalt not kill, and he who does
Shall fear the judgment.' But I say:
He who is with his brother wroth—

Without a cause—shall stand in awe
Of judgment; and who 'Raca' says
Shall fear the council; and who says,
'Thou fool'! shall fear the fire of hell."

"If to the Lord thou bring thy gift,
While yet thy brother is with thee
Unreconciled, first make thy peace
With him, then bring thy offering."

"With enemies soon come to terms,
For fear lest they deliver thee
To judgment, and an officer
Confine thee in a prison cell."

"For verily I say to thee,
Thou shalt by no means come from thence
Until thou shalt have recompensed
In full the one who placed thee there."

"It hath been said by men of old,
'Be guiltless of adultery.'
But even in the mind I say
One may in thought commit this sin."

"If by thy right eye led astray,
Then pluck it out! 'Tis better that
Thou enter life by losing one,
Than perish all eternally."

"If led by thy right hand to sin,
Remove it! It is better that
Thou enter life one member gone,
Than thy whole body should be lost."

"It hath been said, 'If thou wilt put
Thy wife away, so certify
In writing.' But I say to you,
Adultery alone is cause."

"It hath been said by men of old,
'Thou shalt not falsely swear, but shalt
Perform unto the Lord thine oaths.'
I say to you, swear not at all!"

"Not by Jehovah's throne on high,
Nor by the earth, his footstool, vow;
Nor by Jerusalem, which is
The city of the mighty king."

"Affirm not by thy head, because
Thou canst not change a single hair.
Let yea be yea, and nay be nay,
For more than these of evil comes."

"An eye for eye, and tooth for tooth
The law required, but unto you
I say, if one thy cheek shall smite,
The other also to him turn."

"If one at law thy coat will take,
Then let him have thy cloak as well.
If one compelled thee to attend
Him for a mile, twain with him go."

"To him that asketh of thee, give.
From borrowers turn not away."

"It hath been said, 'Thy neighbor love,
And hate your adversary. I
Command you love your enemies;
To those that curse you, blessing give."

"For those that persecute you pray;
That ye may be the sons of him,
Who sends his sunshine and his rain
Upon the evil and the good."

"What do ye more than other men,
If ye show love for those alone,
Who manifest their love for you?
Do not the publicans the same?"

"If ye salute your friends alone,
What do ye more than other men?
Do not the publicans do so?
Be perfect as your Father is!"

"Thine alms in secret give. Let not
Thy right hand know thy left hand's deeds;
And then thy Father will bestow
His blessings on thee openly."

"And when thou prayest, enter in
Thy closet, making fast the door.
In secret pray, for he who sees
In secret openly rewards."

"Employ not (as the heathen do)
Vain repetitions, for your needs
Are known to God before you ask;
And therefore in this manner pray."

THE LORD'S PRAYER

"Our Father who in heaven art
  May thy name hallowed be.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done
  On earth, as now with thee."

"This day our daily bread provide,
  And take our sins away
As we forgive the sins of those
  Who injure us, we pray."

"And lead us not to tempted be,
  But save us we implore
From sin. For kingdom, glory, might
  Are thine for evermore."

"If ye forgive your fellow men their faults,
Then will your Father freely pardon you.
If ye forgive not men their trespasses,
No more will God, your Father, pardon yours."

"Moreover, when ye fast, appear not sad
Like hypocrites, in order to be seen
Of men; but let your fasting secret be,
And he who sees in secret will reward."

"Let not this earth become your treasure house,
Where moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break in;
But let your wealth be in the world above,
For where your treasure is, your heart will be."

"The light the body has is through the eyes.
If they behold one object, they are true;
But if they are diseased, or double see,
The vision will be darkened, or confused."

"No man can serve two masters. He will hate
The one, while he the other master loves;
Or cleave to one, while he the other leaves.
Ye likewise cannot God and mammon serve."

"I bid you therefore take no anxious thought
Of life about the things to eat or drink;
Or raiment for the body. For behold
The birds, and think how God provides for them."

"For who can add a cubit to his height
By being anxious? In regard to clothes
Consider how the care-free lilies grow,
Surpassing in their glory Solomon."

"If God so clothe the field in loveliness,
Which is but for a day, and then cut down,
And used for fuel, how much rather he
Will clothe you, O ye men of little faith!"

"So for the morrow take no anxious thought,
Nor say: 'What shall we eat?' 'What shall we drink?'
Or, 'Wherewithall shall we our bodies clothe?'
Your Father knoweth that ye need these things."

"But seek ye first the kingdom of the Lord
And righteousness, and all these other things
Shall unto you be added. Borrow not
Tomorrow's cares and troubles for today."

"Judge not, and ye in turn shall not be judged;
For with the judgment ye to others give,
Ye shall be judged. The measure that ye mete
Shall unto you be meted out again."

"And why beholdest thou a little mote
Within thy brother's eye, while all the time
A greater fault, which seems to be a beam
Compared with his, is still within thine own?"

"Why say, 'My brother, let me from your eye
Remove the mote.' While thine contains a beam?
First cast the beam from thine own eye, and then
Thou canst with clearer sight thy brother help."

"Your holy things bestow not on the dogs,
Nor cast before the swine your precious pearls.
They will but trample them beneath their feet,
And turn again and vent their rage on you."

"Petition, seek, and knock, for every one
That asketh of my Father, shall receive;
And he that seeketh earnestly, shall find.
To him that knocketh, it shall opened be."

"What father, if his son shall ask for bread,
Will give to him instead a flinty stone?
Or if he ask a fish, will he for this
Present a serpent that would injure him?"

"If sinful men know how to give good gifts
To needy children, how much rather will
Your Father give good things to all of those
Who earnestly shall make request of Him?"

"All things that ye desire that men should do
To you, do ye the very same to them.
For this is the fulfilling of the law,
And the requirement of the prophets, too."

"Endeavor to get in the narrow gate,
For wide the portal is, and broad the way
Which leadeth to destruction, and the souls
Which enter it are a great multitude."

"But narrow is the gate which leads to life,
And few are those who find and enter it.
Beware of prophets that may come to you
Resembling sheep, but having hearts of wolves."

"Ye may distinguish teachers by their fruits.
The thistle has no figs, the thorn no grapes.
So every good tree bringeth forth good fruit,
While trees corrupt will only evil bear."

"The fruit will prove the nature of the tree.
But every tree that beareth evil fruit
Shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.
So by their fruits ye shall distinguish them."

"Not every one that calleth me his Lord
Shall heaven's kingdom enter, but the one
Who does my Father's will shall be received
Within the company of blessëd ones."

"For in that day will many say to me,
Lord, Lord, in thy name have we prophesied,
And in thy name cast evil spirits out,
And in thy name done many mighty works!"

"Then will I say to them, I know you not.
Depart ye workers of iniquity!
The one who hears my teaching, and obeys
Is like a man who built upon a rock."

"The rains descended, and the torrents came,
The winds blew fearfully, but all in vain.
The dwelling was uninjured by the test,
Because upon the solid rock it stood."

"The one who hears my words, and does them not,
Is like a foolish man who on the sand
Erects his residence. Rain, floods and winds
Assault it, and the fall of it is great."

When thus the Saviour ended his discourse,
The people greatly marveled, for he taught
Unlike the scribes, who would unfold the law,
While he instead spoke with authority.

A CENTURIAN'S FAITH

A Roman captain or centurian,
Who had a servant whom he dearly loved
Afflicted with that terrible disease,
Paralysis, which robs one of all strength,
To Jesus sent some rulers of the Jews,
To ask the healing of his faithful slave.

The men commissioned said, "He is our friend,
And for us he has built a synagogue."
Then Jesus went with them, but just before
He reached the house, the captain sent again,
To say that it was needless for the Lord
To enter his unworthy residence.

He also said, "I am unfit to come
Before the Master's presence. Let him speak
A single word, and healing will result.
I am a man with some authority;
My soldiers carry out my least commands,
As I myself obey superiors."

Then Jesus turning to his followers,
Remarked: "I have not found such faith as this
Among the favored people Israel."
When those who came to make request returned,
They found the paralytic quite restored,
In answer to his master's childlike faith.

THE WIDOW'S SON RESTORED TO LIFE

One day as Jesus and his followers
Approached the little city known as Nain,
They met a sad procession from the town.
A widow's only son, her staff and hope,
Was being carried to his resting place
Within the silent city of the dead.

The Widow's sorrow touched the Master's heart.
But soon her tears were changed to those of joy.
He bade the mourning retinue stand still,
And on the bier that wonder-working hand
Was laid. Then calling back the spirit fled,
He said: "Young man, I say to thee arise!"

Awaking from the sleep of death, the youth
Sat up, and spoke to those who stood around.
Then Jesus to the mother gave her son,
While all gave praise and glory unto God.
That funeral procession was transformed
Into a march of joyous victory.

A WOMAN ANOINTS JESUS' FEET

A Pharisee named Simon made request
That Jesus would partake of food with him.
The Master willingly complied, and went;
But while reclining in the banquet hall,
(According to the custom of the Jews),
A sinful woman quietly approached.

She broke an alabaster box, and poured
The precious ointment on his blessëd feet,
While her repentant tears upon them flowed,
Then with her tresses loose she wiped them dry,
Anointing them with fragrant, healing balm,
Her kisses raining on them all the while.

But Simon seeing this, within his heart
Was thinking, if his guest a prophet were,
He would know all about her character,
Which had been tarnished by an evil life.
The Master knew his thoughts, and so he said
To Simon: "I would something say to thee."

"Continue," said the host. Then Jesus asked:
"If one should have two debtors, one of whom
Should owe the creditor five hundred pence,
The second owing but one-tenth that sum,
And both should be forgiven, which of them
Do you suppose will have the greater love?"

Then Simon answered: "I suppose the one,
Who had been more forgiven, more would love."
The Master said: "Your answer is correct."
Then turning to the woman at his feet,
He bade the Pharisee behold her there,
The picture of adoring penitence.

"I entered in thy house at thy request,
Thou gavest me no water for my feet;
But she hath washed them with her precious tears,
And made a towel of her flowing locks.
Thou with thy lips saluted not thy guest,
While she hath kissed my feet unceasingly."

"No oil was poured by thee upon my head;
But she hath lavished ointment on my feet.
I say to thee, her sins, which many are,
Are all forgiven, for she much hath loved."
He said to her: "Thy sins are purged away.
Thy faith is thy salvation. Go in peace."

TWO BLIND MEN RECEIVE SIGHT

As Jesus walked along the road one day,
Two blind men followed, calling after him:
"O David's Son, be merciful to us!"
But seemingly he did not hear their cries.
Perhaps his purpose was to test their faith.
Without reply, he entered some abode.

They followed him, and Jesus said to them:
"Do you believe that I can do this thing?"
"Yea, Lord," they said. And Jesus touched their eyes,
When lenses quite insensible till then
Responded to the light, and on their minds
Was photographed the image of the Christ.

He bade them keep this secret, but the two,
Departing, spread his fame on every side.
A man possessed and dumb was brought to Christ,
And was at once restored to liberty.
The tongue so long in bondage joined in praise
With others to the God of Israel.

But some opponents from Jerusalem
Insinuated that he could expel
The demons through Beelzebub, their chief.
Then Jesus said, "A kingdom or a house
Against itself divided cannot stand.
Would Satan therefore fight against his own?"

"If through an influence divine I cast
The evil spirits out, you then should know
The kingdom of the Lord is near to you."
Then Jesus left them, grieving in his heart,
Because the Father's works which he had done
Had been by men so misinterpreted.

JESUS STILLS THE TEMPEST

The Master gave command to cross the sea.
A certain scribe remarked that he would go
With him in all his journeys everywhere.
But Jesus answered, "Foxes have their dens,
The birds their nests, but I, the Son of man,
Possess no place where I can lay my head."

Another said, "Lord, I will follow thee,
When I have laid my father in the grave."
But Jesus answered, "Come thou after me,
And let the dead inter their dead, but thou
Proclaim the kingdom of the living God!"
They then embarked, and left the shore behind.

The weary Saviour, who possessed no home,
Was sleeping heedless of the growing storm.
The dashing waves and roaring of the wind
Made no impression on the Son of man;
For his was weariness that follows toil,
Especially of work misunderstood.

The twelve awoke him, saying: "Master, save!
We perish!" Then arose the Son of God,
And stilled them first, and then rebuked the storm,
And in a moment winds and waves were hushed,
Obedient to their Creator's voice.
The tempest was replaced by perfect calm.

His followers with voices full of awe
Then questioned one another: "Who is this,
That winds and sea obey when he commands?"
Then all was peaceful till they neared the town
Of Gadara upon the eastern shore,
Among the famous hills of Gilead.

THE DEMONIAC RESTORED

As they ascended from the pebble beach,
A fierce demoniac accosted them.
The heart—intended for the throne of God—
Was in possession of his enemies.
He dwelt among the tombs, and day and night
The air resounded with his horrid cries.

He was the terror of the neighborhood.
For dread of him no one would pass that way.
He often had been bound, but with a strength
Unnatural had broken chains like flax;
But now with body naked, bruised and foul
He humbly knelt before the conqueror.

He cried: "Thou Jesus, Son of God most high,
What can there be between thyself and us?
Torment us not before our time shall come!
Command us not to go into the depths,
But suffer us instead to enter in
The herd of swine now feeding on the hill."

The devils were allowed to have their wish,
And entering the pigs, at once the herd
Through influence satanic headlong rushed
O'er precipice, and perished in the sea.
The keepers fled, and quickly spread abroad
The story of the maniac and swine.

This injury to life and property
Was that of fiends upon destruction bent.
The people from the town came out, and saw
The man now sane and clothed and at the feet
Of Jesus, but instead of giving thanks,
They prayed that he would from their coasts depart.

As Jesus and his followers embarked,
The man released from Satan's fearful yoke,
Requested that he might accompany
The Master, but the Saviour bade him go
To his own home, and tell the people there
What God had in his mercy done for him.

THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

When Jesus reached Capernaum again,
A man named Jairus, of the synagogue
A ruler, came, and falling at his feet
Related how his child, a girl of twelve,
Was dying; and he begged our Lord at once
To come and lay his healing hand on her.

Without delay the Master went with him
To do a deed of mercy, while a throng
Of eager followers about him surged.
A woman who had suffered twelve long years,
And spent her all in trying to be healed,
Now came behind, and touched his garment's hem.

This one so timid, yet so strong in faith,
Believed that if she only touched the fringe
Of Jesus' robe, she would be whole again.
She carried out her plan, and felt within
Herself a strength and happiness unknown
For many years; but she concealed her joy.

The Saviour knowing all things, said aloud:
"Who touched me?" But they answered, "Master, see,
The people throng thee! Wherefore sayest thou
'Who touched me?'" Only one within that crowd
Had truly touched him. Jesus turned around
To see the woman who had done this thing.

When she observing that she could not hide
From his allseeing eye, fell at his feet,
And with a trembling voice confession made,
Relating how she instantly was healed.
Then Jesus answered, "Daughter, go in peace!
Be comforted. Thy faith hath made thee whole."

As they delayed, a messenger arrived,
Who nearly broke the anxious father's heart,
By saying: "Trouble not the Master more.
The maid is dead, and now beyond all help."
The Saviour to the stricken ruler said:
"Be not afraid! Believe! She shall be healed!"

But when they reached the ruler's residence,
The hireling mourners were about their trade.
The air resounded with their cries of woe.
The Master stilled them, saying that the maid
Was sleeping. Then they laughed at him in scorn,
Well knowing that the fire of life was quenched.

Then Jesus put them out, and taking but
The parents of the girl with Peter, James
And John into the chamber, he addressed
The form so still and white reclining there.
He took her hand, and saying: "Maid arise!"
Her spirit came at once to her again.

A wondrous transformation now took place.
The marble features soon were flushed with rose;
The bosom heaved; the windows of the soul
Were opened, and arising well and strong,
She needed food. The wonder-working Christ
Requested that this should not spread abroad.

The master went to towns and villages
Proclaiming the glad tidings everywhere,
And healing sickness in its varied forms.
But when he saw the helpless multitudes,
Like scattered sheep without a shepherd's care,
His mighty heart was moved with sympathy.

Then said he to his chosen followers:
"Abundant is the harvest but too few
The laborers to gather in the same;
And therefore to the Lord of harvests pray,
That he may send forth other toilers, who
Will gather in the fruitage of his fields."

THE IMPOTENT MAN HEALED

The second Passover was drawing nigh,
And Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
Within the porches by Bethesda's pool
He saw a multitude of halt, and blind,
And withered, and diseased humanity,
All waiting for the water to be moved.

The people thought that at a certain time
An angel stirred the waters of the pool,
And gave them healing virtue. He who then
First stepped within the basin was made whole
Of whatsoever sickness he might have.
So all were waiting in expectancy.

A certain man for eight and thirty years
Confined to bed by an infirmity,
Was lying with the rest. When Jesus saw
Him there, and knew his years of suffering,
He pitied him, and of his own accord,
Inquired if he would like to be restored.

The invalid replied: "I have no one
To put me in the pool, when it is stirred;
But while I crawl to reach the healing flood,
Some other person steppeth down before."
Then Jesus said: "Arise, and take thy bed,
And walk!" And this was on the Sabbath day.

Then said the Jews to him who had been cured:
"It is not lawful on the Sabbath day
For thee to bear a burden of this kind."
But he replied: "The one that made me well
Commanded that I should take up my bed,
And with it to return unto my home."

They asked the man, who gave him that command.
He did not know, for Jesus secretly
Had disappeared among the multitude.
But afterward, the Saviour finding him
Within the temple, said: "Now thou art whole.
Beware of sin for fear of something worse."

The man, departing, now informed the Jews,
That it was Jesus who had made him well.
And therefore did they persecute the Christ,
And seek to slay him, for this miracle
(Like other healings unsolicited)
Was done upon their holy Sabbath day.

"My Father worketh hitherto," said Christ,
"And I do likewise." Therefore sought the Jews
The more to kill him, for their Sabbath rules
Were disregarded by him, and he said
Jehovah was his Father, placing thus
Himself on an equality with God.

Then answered Jesus, saying: "Verily
I say to you, the Son can do no work,
Except the things he sees the Father do;
And these the Son does likewise, for the Son
Is of the Father loved, and God will show
Him other things more marvelous than these."

"For as the Father raiseth up the dead,
And quickeneth them, even so the Son
Bestows the gift of life on whom he will.
The Father judgeth no man, but instead
All judgment hath committed to the Son,
In order that all men should honor him."

"For he that honors not the Son, the same
Reveres the Father not, who sent him forth.
I truly say to you, that he who hears
My word, and in the one who sent me trusts,
The same possesses everlasting life,
And shall not into condemnation come."

"Believers now have passed from death to life.
And verily I say, the hour will come,
Yes, even now is here, wherein the dead
Shall hear the message of the Son of God,
And they that hear and heed his call shall live,
For like the Father, he is Lord of life."

"And God hath given him authority—
Because he is the Son of man—to judge.
But marvel not at this, the hour will come
When all within their graves shall hear his voice,
And to their resurrection shall come forth,
The good to live, the bad to be condemned."

"I of myself alone can nothing do;
But as I hear, I judge, and it is just,
Because I do not seek to have my way,
But always to obey the will of him
Who sent me. If I witness of myself,
My testimony might be thought untrue."

"There is another who hath testified.
Ye sent to John, who witnessed to the truth.
(Although I need not human witnesses)
But this I tell you, that ye may be saved.
He was a burning and a shining light,
And for a season ye rejoiced in him."

"But greater witnesses have I than John.
The works I do are evidence to you
That I from God the Father have been sent.
And he himself hath testified of me;
But ye have never listened to his voice,
Nor have ye ever looked upon his form;"

"And in your hearts his word doth not abide,
For ye believe not him whom he hath sent.
Ye search the Scriptures, for in them ye think
Ye have eternal life, and truly they
Are they which testify concerning me.
Ye will not come to me that ye may live."

"I know that ye have not the love of God
Abiding in you, for ye do reject
The one who has in his own Father's name
Been sent to you; but if another come
In his own name, that one ye will receive.
It is not strange that ye do not believe,"

"For ye are seeking one another's praise,
And not the honor which belongs to God.
Imagine not that I will you accuse
Before the Father, but another does,
And that is Moses, for he wrote of me;
But ye believe not him, nor yet my words."

THE TWELVE CHARGED AND SENT OUT

The Lord again returned to Galilee.
Then calling his apostles unto him,
He sent them two and two to every town
And village whither he himself would go.
He bade them heal the sick, and raise the dead,
And say, "Messiah's kingdom is at hand."

He bade them make no charge for services,
But give them freely, for they had themselves
Received this gift without equivalent.
He told them also nothing to prepare,
No staves, nor money, script, nor extra clothes.
"The laborer is worthy of his hire."

"To whatsoever city ye shall go,"
He said, "Inquire who there may worthy be,
And in that place continue, going not
From house to house. If it shall worthy prove
Your blessing shall abide upon that home;
If not, it shall return to you again."

"If any shall refuse to hear your words,
Or give you shelter, when you leave that house
Or city, shake the dust from off your feet;
For verily I tell you it shall be
For Sodom and Gomorrah easier
Than it will be for such on judgment day."

"As sheep among the wolves I send you forth.
Be wise as serpents, harmless as the doves.
Beware of men, who will deliver you
To councils, and within their synagogues
Will scourge you, and before their governors
And kings (for my name's sake) will censure you."

"Prepare no words with which to answer them.
The Spirit of your Father in that hour
Shall guide you in the words that ye shall speak.
The brother will to brother prove untrue,
The parents will their children persecute,
And sons and daughters prove undutiful."

"And ye because of me shall hated be
Of all the world; but he that to the end
Endureth shall be saved. If therefore then
They persecute ye in a certain town,
Another seek. Before ye make the rounds
Of Israel, the Son of man will come."

"The servant is not greater than his lord,
And the disciple has a lower place
Than he who teaches. If the Master then
Be called Beelzebub, most surely ye,
The members of his household will receive
Such appellations. Therefore fear them not."

"And fear not those who can the body slay,
But who are powerless to kill the soul.
Much rather fear the one who can destroy
Both soul and body; Yea, revere ye him!
Are not two sparrows for a farthing sold?
And yet not one without your Father falls."

"The number of your hairs is known to God;
And ye are in relationship to him
Much dearer than a multitude of birds.
Whoever will on earth confess my name
Before his fellow men, that one will I
Before my Father and his angels own;"

"But whosoever shall my name deny
In presence of his fellows, him will I
Disclaim before my Father's face above.
You must not think that I to earth have come
To bring the dove of peace into the world;
Instead of this, I came to bring a sword."

"My teaching will be cause of variance
In families. A person's foes will be
His kindred and the members of his house.
But he that loves his parents more than me,
Or son or daughter more than his own Lord,
The same is an unworthy follower."

"Whoever shall refuse to take his cross,
And follow in my steps, does not deserve
To have a place among my followers.
The one who saves his life shall lose the same;
While he who for my sake will give it up,
That one shall find it in a higher sense."

"He that receiveth you, receiveth me;
And he who welcomes me, accepts of him
Who sent me. Any one who gives a drink
Of water to a follower of mine,
I tell you truly, such shall nowise fail
To be rewarded in the world to come."

JOHN SENDS TWO DISCIPLES TO JESUS

When Jesus finished his instructions, he
Departed, making still another tour
Of towns and villages of Galilee.
Then John, immured within the prison dark,
On hearing of the mighty deeds of Christ,
Sent two of his disciples unto him.

They came, and questioned Jesus: "Art thou he
Whom we expected, or shall we await
Another?" Doubtless, as a prophet, John,
Well knowing that his end was drawing near,
When he must leave these faithful followers,
Had sent them to behold the Lamb of God.

While they were waiting for our Lord's reply,
The Saviour many miracles performed,
Then answered: "Go and tell to John again
The works and words that ye have seen and heard.
The blind receive their sight, the lame now walk,
The lepers are made clean, the deaf now hear."

"The dead are raised, and to the poor is preached
The gospel. Truly blessed is the one
That shall not be offended by my ways."
As soon as they departed, Jesus spoke
To all the multitude concerning John:
"What went ye to the wilderness to see?"

"Did you behold a reed that bent and swayed
With every breeze? What went ye out to see?
A man in raiment soft and delicate?
Those so arrayed are found in palaces.
What was it then that ye went out to see?
A prophet? Yea, indeed, and even more."

"For this is he of whom a prophet wrote:
'Before thy face I send my messenger,
In order that he may prepare thy way.'
For verily among the sons of men
Of women born, no greater one than John
The Baptist has arisen in the world."

"But notwithstanding this the very least
In the Messiah's kingdom may be said
To greater be than John in privilege.
From John the Baptist's days until this time
Messiah's kingdom, like a land besieged,
Is taken by the earnest ones with force."

"And if ye will receive it, this indeed
Is that Elias prophesied to come.
Let him who hath the ears to hear this, hear!
This generation is compared to what?
'Tis like to children in the market place,
Unwilling to be pleased with anything."

"'We have for you made music,' they exclaim
To one another, 'and ye have not danced!
And when as at a funeral we mourned,
Ye made no lamentation in response!'
For John austere came fasting, as ye know,
And ye have said: 'He is a man possessed.' "

"The Son of man was different from John.
He ate and drank, and yet ye were not pleased,
But called him gluttonous and wine-bibber,
A friend of sinners and of publicans.
Jehovah's wisdom will be justified
In all the witnesses that he hath sent."

Then were the cities where our blessed Lord
Had done so many mighty miracles
Upbraided by him: "Woe," he said, "to thee
Bethsaida, and to thee Chorazim, too,
For if the mighty works which have been done
In you, had been performed in heathen Tyre,"

"Or done in Sidon, they had long ago
In sackcloth of repentance clothed themselves,
And on their heads the ashes strewn, to show
By outward signs their deeper penitence;
But in the judgment day I tell you that
It shall be easier for these than you."

"And thou Capernaum exalted high
In privilege, shall down to hell be brought;
For if the mighty works which thou hast seen,
Had been performed in Sodom, it had stood
A mighty city till the present day.
But unto you I say because of this,"

"That it for Sodom on the judgment day
Will be more tolerable than for thee."
And then the Master looking upward, said:
"I thank thee, Father, who art Lord of all,
Because thou hast from wise and prudent men
Concealed these things, and shown them unto babes;"

"Yea, Father, since 'tis pleasing in thy sight.
The Father hath delivered all to me,
For he alone can understand the Son;
And none except the Son the Father knows,
And he to whom the Son revealeth him."
Then turning to his followers, he said:

"O heavy laden ones come unto me,
And ye who toil and I will give you rest.
Upon you take my yoke, and learn of me,
For I in heart am meek, and free from pride,
And rest of soul may by you thus be found;
My yoke is easy, and my burden light."

JESUS PREACHES BY THE SEASIDE

One day the Master sitting in a boat,
Improved the opportunity to teach
The multitude that gathered on the shore.
He drew his lessons from the treasure house
Of nature, speaking of the wheat and tares,
The mustard seed, and other homely things.

"Behold a sower scattering the seed!"
He said, "And as he sows, some kernels fall
Upon the wayside, where the ground is hard,
To lie there till the hungry birds descend
And eat them. Others in the stony soil
Find lodgment, soon to put forth tender leaves."

"But when the sun beats fiercely on their heads,
They wither, for they have no depth of earth,
Some seeds are scattered mid the springing thorns,
The latter quickly grow, and choke the grain.
But others fall on good ground well prepared,
And yield from thirty to one hundred fold."

The meaning of this parable our Lord
Expounded to the twelve at their request.
The seed he likened to the Word of God.
He was himself the sower of the same.
The soil was furnished by the hearts of men,
Which differ in their nature like a field.

Some hearts are like the trodden wayside soil,
Permitting not the Word to enter in;
But as it lies upon the surface hard,
'Tis quickly taken by the evil one.
Some hearts are like the warm but shallow ground
Above the rocks. Such gladly hear the Word,

But having little depth of character,
Or root, they wither in temptation's hour.
The seed among the thorns are those who hear,
But riches, cares and pleasures of this world
(Like evil weeds which always grow apace)
O'ershadow them, preventing fruitfulness.

The good ground hearers are those honest hearts,
Who having heard, and understood the word,
Obey its teachings, bearing in their lives
A fruitage thirty to an hundred fold.
And then another parable he spoke,
To show them what his kingdom would be like.

"A certain man with good seed sowed his field;
But while he slept, a foe there scattered tares.
So with the springing wheat the tares appeared.
The workmen came, and to the owner said:
'Sir, hast thou not thy field with good seed sown?
In what way shall we for the tares account?'"

"The landlord said, 'An enemy did this.'
The laborers then asked if they should go,
And pull the tares out from the growing wheat.
He answered, 'Nay, lest while ye pull the tares,
Ye also root the wheat up with the weeds.
Let both together grow till harvest time.'"

"'Then will I bid the reapers take the tares
And burn them, while they store the grain away
Within my barn.'" When his disciples asked
The meaning of this parable, he said:
"The wheat field is the world, and he who sows
Therein the good seed is the Son of man."

"The wheat are those who love and serve the Lord.
The devil is the foe, who comes by night,
And scatters evil tares among the grain.
The tares are children of the wicked one.
The harvest is the ending of the world.
The angels then will reap the harvest field."

"The Son of man will send his angels forth,
And they will gather all things that offend,
And cast them in the fire like worthless tares.
Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun
Within the kingdom of their Father, God.
Let those who have the ears to hear this, hear!"

The Master said his kingdom should be like
A grain of mustard seed sown in a field.
The mustard is among the smallest seeds,
But when 'tis grown, 'tis greatest among herbs,
So that the feathered songsters of the air
May in its branches find a lodging place.

Then to the yeast or leaven Christ compared
His kingdom. Introduced into the meal,
It grows by ever adding to itself,
For 'tis possessed of life, and quietly
It works, until the meal completely changed,
Is like the leaven which it has received.

Another parable he spake to them,
And said "Messiah's kingdom is compared
To buried treasure hidden in a field,
Which when a man hath found, he will conceal,
And in the hope of getting it, will sell
His all, that he may buy that property."

Again his kingdom was by him compared
To one who was a trader seeking pearls,
Who having found a jewel of great worth,
He sold all his belongings that he might
Become possessor of that perfect gem,
Assured that it was fully worth the price.

Again Messiah's kingdom to a net
Was likened by the Master. This when cast,
Will gather every kind both good and bad;
But when the seine is full, and drawn to shore,
The fishermen select, and save the good,
But throw the bad or worthless fish away.

"So shall it be when earth shall reach its end.
The angels shall come forth, and separate
The evil doers from among the just,
And cast the wicked from their sight away."
Then Jesus asked the twelve if they had grasped
The meaning of these things. They answered, "Yea."

He said: "A well instructed scribe is like
To one who is a householder, and who
Will bring to view from out his treasure store
Some ancient things and others that are new."
When Jesus finished all these parables,
He visited the region called his own.

A PROPHET IN HIS OWN COUNTRY

The Master's wisdom much astonished those
Who knew him. "Is this not the carpenter?
Is not his mother Mary? And are not
His brothers and his sisters all with us?
From whence then come his deeds and words?" they asked.
His claims to greatness much offended them.

But Jesus said: "A prophet hath no lack
Of honor save within his native land,
Among his kindred, or in his own house."
He did not many mighty works for them,
Because their unbelief prevented him.
A few however felt his healing touch.

Then came his mother and his relatives,
In order to obtain an interview;
But they could not approach him for the crowd
Of human beings that surrounded him.
Then someone told him that they stood without,
Desiring that they might converse with him.

"Who are my mother and my relatives?"
The Master asked. Then looking round about
On those who followed him, he said: "Behold
My mother and my brethren! Every one
That does my Father's will, the same to me
Is as my mother, brother, sister, friend."

HEROD KILLS JOHN THE BAPTIST

The tetrarch Herod hearing of the fame
Of Jesus, said: "'Tis John the Baptist, who
Has risen from the dead, and therefore these
Great works do manifest themselves in him."
For Herod had imprisoned John to please
Herodias, his brother Philip's wife.

The Baptist had rebuked the wicked king
For taking her, and making her his own.
Herodias for this cause hated John,
And gladly would have put him to the sword,
But Herod feared in this to do her will.
She therefore waited till her time should come.

At last when Herod's birthday had arrived,
And all his underlings of Galilee
Were met to pay their compliments to him,
And pledge their fealty to him in wine,
She found the opportunity she sought
To wreak her vengeance on her hated foe.

Her daughter like a common dancing girl
Amused the king and nobles in the hall.
The monarch promised with an oath to give
The maiden anything that she might ask.
She said: "I pray thee, give me by and by
The head of John the Baptist in a dish."

The king was sorry, yet because he feared
What they who banqueted with him might say,
He sent at once an executioner,
Who in the prison-house beheaded John,
And brought the ghastly trophy to the court,
To be bestowed upon the hardened girl.

Disciples of the fallen prophet bore
His body with deep sorrow to the grave;
And then they wisely came and told our Lord,
Who said to them and to his chosen twelve:
"To some secluded spot we will depart,
And for a little season rest ourselves."

With this in view, embarking, they set sail,
But failed to find the rest for which they sought;
For they were seen by many, who pursued
On foot around the margin of the lake.
So when at last they reached the farther shore,
A multitude was there to welcome them.

THE FIVE THOUSAND FED

The Master had compassion on the throng.
They seemed like sheep without a shepherd's care.
He healed their sick; but when the evening came
His followers were anxious, as the place
Was desert and the hour already late.
They asked him to disperse the multitude.

But Jesus answered them: "They need not go.
Provide for them." They said, "Our store consists
Of two small fishes and five barley loaves."
The Master answered: "Bring them here to me."
Then he commanded all assembled there,
To seat themselves in rows upon the grass.

Then taking in his hands the barley loaves
And fishes, after giving thanks to God,
He broke the food, and gave it to the twelve,
And they in turn supplied the multitude,
Till all were satisfied. Then gathered they
Twelve baskets full of fragments that remained.

The number fed was full five thousand men
Besides some women and some little ones.
When Jesus thus had shown ability
To spread a table in the wilderness,
The people thought by force to make him king,
And eagerly the twelve concurred in this.

So Jesus first constrained them to depart
Without him in the boat by which they came.
He bade them cross the Sea of Galilee,
While he should send the multitude away.
When all were gone, the Saviour climbed alone
The mountain side, to spend the night with God.

JESUS GOES TO AID HIS DISCIPLES

It proved a stormy night, the wind increased
And blew with force upon the vessel's prow.
The sturdy fishermen who knew the sea,
Could make no headway, still they persevered,
Endeavoring to carry out the wish
Of Jesus, who had given the command.

Their Master who was Lord of winds and waves
Could see them as they toiled upon the lake;
But knowing that the storm was for their good,
It was not till the early morning watch
He went to their assistance o'er the sea,
Against the gale which long had held them back.

They saw him in the twilight of the dawn.
He seemed a spirit walking on the sea.
They cried in terror, but the Master soon
Relieved their fears, by calling: "It is I!"
Then Peter answered: "Lord if it be thou,
Command me on the water come to thee."

The Master bade him come. Then Peter tried
To walk upon the waves, to go to him.
His faith was not sufficient for the task.
He cried aloud, as he began to sink:
"Lord, save me, or I perish!" Jesus caught
And held him, saying: "Wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Then gladly they received him in the boat,
And in a little while they reached the shore.
The people gathered round them to inquire
Of Jesus how he came, for well they knew
The twelve apostles had set out alone,
No other boat beside theirs being there.

CHRIST'S SERMON ON THE BREAD OF LIFE

The Master said: "It is because ye ate
The loaves, and have been filled, ye seek for me.
The bread that will endure is better worth
Your labor than the bread that perishes.
This bread the Son of man will give to you,
For his commission bears the seal of God."

Then said they unto him: "What shall we do
To work the works of God?" The Lord replied:
"The work of God is that ye should believe
On him whom he hath sent into the world."
They asked, "What sign wilt thou vouchsafe to us,
That we may see it, and believe in thee?"

"Our fathers in the desert manna ate,
As it is written in a certain Psalm:
'He of the corn of heaven gave to them.'"
Then Jesus answered: "Verily I say,
It was not Moses who the manna gave.
My Father gives to you the living bread."

"The bread of God is he that cometh down
From heaven, to provide the world with life.
They said, 'Lord ever more give us this bread!"
"I am the bread of life," the Lord replied.
Whoever comes to me shall hunger not,
And he who trusts in me shall never thirst."

"Though ye have seen me, yet believe ye not.
All that the Father giveth me shall come
To me; and he that cometh unto me,
I will on no condition cast him out.
From heaven I have come to do the will
Of him who sent me, not to do my own."

"The will of Him who sent me is that I
Should nothing lose of all he giveth me,
But raise it up again at the last day.
And the desire of him who sent me is,
That every one who sees the Son, and trusts
In him, should everlasting life receive."

"Such on the last day will I raise again."
Because he said he was the bread which came
From heaven, many Jews found fault with him.
They asked: "Is this not Jesus, Joseph's son,
Whose father and whose mother we well know?
Why does he say that he came from above?"

The Master said, "No man can come to me
Except the Father draw him. He who hears,
And of my Father learns will to me come.
No man hath seen the Father save the Son.
I tell you truly, he that trusts in me
Possesses even now eternal life."

"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate
The manna in the wilderness and died.
This is the bread that cometh from above;
If any eat thereof, the same shall live.
I am the living bread from heaven come,
And those who eat of me shall never die."

"The bread that I will give you is my flesh
Bestowed upon the world that it may live."
The Jews at this contended, saying: "How
Can this man give to us his flesh to eat?"
Then Jesus answered them: "Unless ye eat
My flesh, and drink my blood ye have no life."

"But he who eats and drinks of me shall live,
And at the last day I will raise him up.
My flesh and blood are meat and drink indeed,
And those who feed on me shall in me dwell.
This is indeed the bread from heaven come.
Not such as fed your fathers who are dead."

These things he told them in Capernaum.
Then many of his followers exclaimed:
"Who can this difficult instruction hear?"
The Saviour knew the nature of their thoughts,
And so replied to them: "Doth this offend?
What if ye see the Son of man ascend?"

"The spirit, not the flesh, will profit you.
My words are spirit, they are also life."
Then many who had followed went away,
And walked no more with Jesus, so he said
To his apostles: "Will ye also go?"
Then Simon Peter answered for them all,

"To whom, Lord, shall we go? Thou hast the words
Of life eternal. We believe that thou
Art the anointed one, the Son of God."
Then Jesus said: "Have I not chosen you?
Yet one among the twelve is Satan's slave."
He spoke of Judas called Iscariot.

CHRIST REPROVES THE PHARISEES

The scribes and Pharisees to Jesus came,
Demanding why his followers transgressed
Traditions of the elders, washing not
Their hands before partaking of their food?
But Jesus asked the questioners why they
By their traditions broke the laws of God.

"For God commanded, saying: 'Honor thou
Thy father and thy mother. Any one
That curseth these, let him be put to death.'
According to your teaching he who says
To parents: 'All the profit I might be
To you is now devoted unto God,'"

"That one is free. So the command of God
Is by your teaching made of none effect.
Ye hyprocrites! Well did Isaiah say
Of you: 'This people draweth near to me
With words, and with their lips they honor me,
But all the time their hearts are far away.'"

"'But vainly do they seek to worship me,
Their doctrines being but commands of men.'"
Then said he to the multitude: "Not that
Which enters in the mouth defiles the man,
But rather that which cometh from the mouth
Is more important, making one unclean."

Then said the twelve: "The Pharisees were much
Offended by the saying which they heard."
The Saviour answered: "Every plant must be
Uprooted, if God hath not planted it.
Like blind that lead the blind are they, and both
Are liable to fall into the ditch."

When asked the meaning of this parable,
The Master said: "The things from out the mouth
Proceed from out the heart. It is the source
Of every evil thought and wicked deed.
These are the things that make a man defiled,
And not the eating with unwashen hands."

THE DAUGHTER OF A WOMAN OF CANAAN HEALED

From there the Saviour took his longest tour,
Which brought him to the coasts of ancient Tyre
And Sidon by the great blue western sea.
A Canaanitish woman from those parts—
With faith remarkable—cried after him:
"O Lord, thou Son of David, pity me!"

"My daughter is possessed and sorely vexed."
But he (to try her faith) made no reply.
The twelve requested him to send away
The woman who was calling after them.
At last he turned, and said that he was sent
But to the straying sheep of Israel.

Then came she near, and worshiped at his feet,
And cried: "Lord help me!" But he answered her:
"It is not meet to take the children's bread,
And cast it unto dogs." This seemed unkind.
But she replied: "True, Lord, yet dogs receive
The crumbs which from the children's table fall."

"O woman," Jesus said, "thy faith is great!
It shall be unto thee e'en as thou wilt."
Her daughter was made whole that very hour.
The Master had come all that weary way,
Because he knew her faith and need of him.
A faith that would not take the answer, "No."

Then back again he came to Galilee,
And climbing up a mountain near the lake,
Soon multitudes came bringing unto him
The lame, the blind, the dumb, the maimed, the sick,
And many others, laying them all down
At Jesus' blessëd feet, and all were healed.

And when the multitude beheld the cures
There wrought, and heard the dumb give praise to God,
And saw the maimed restored, the cripples walk,
And blind eyes opened to the light of day,
They glorified the God of Israel,
And stayed to listen to the Saviour's words.

THE FOUR THOUSAND FED

The Master called the twelve, and said to them:
"I have compassion on the multitude,
Because they have been now three days with me,
And all their food is gone. I will not send
Them fasting to their homes, for fear lest they
Should faint before they reach their journey's end.

They answered: "From what source shall we obtain
Sufficient food here in the wilderness,
To fill so great a company as this?"
Then Jesus asked: "How many loaves have ye?"
They answered, "Seven and some little fish."
Then he commanded all to seat themselves.

Then giving thanks, he brake the bread, and gave
To his disciples, and four thousand men
Beside the women and the children there
Were filled. And after that they gathered up
The broken pieces seven baskets full.
Then Jesus sent the multitude away.

A SIGN FROM HEAVEN DEMANDED

The Pharisees and Sadducees drew near,
And tempting him, desired that he would give
In proof of his Messiahship a sign
From heaven, but the Saviour answered them:
"When it is evening, and the sky is red,
Ye say: 'Tomorrow's weather will be fine.'"

"And in the morning when the sky is red
And lowering, ye say: 'We shall have rain.'
Ye hyprocrites! Ye can discern the sky,
Yet fail to read the omens of the times.
A wicked generation seeketh signs,
But none save that of Jonah shall you have."

THE TWELVE WARNED OF EVIL DOCTRINES

The Master left the crowd, to cross the lake,
Without providing food for future needs.
He bade his twelve apostles to beware
The leaven of the sect of Pharisees,
And also of the sect of Sadducees.
They thought it was because they had no bread.

But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them:
"O ye of little faith! Do ye forget
The feeding of five thousand with five loaves,
And afterward the baskets ye took up?
Or how with seven loaves were satisfied
Four thousand, and the fragments that remained?"

"I speak this not to you concerning bread."
And then the twelve disciples understood
He spoke of doctrines, which are well compared
To leaven in the manner of their growth.
Approaching Caesarea Philippi,
The Saviour asked them what men thought of him.

They answered: "Some believe that thou art John
The Baptist, who has risen from the dead.
Some say thou art Elijah, others say
That thou art Jeremiah, or perhaps
An ancient prophet come to earth again."
The Master asked: "Whom say ye that I am?"

PETER'S CONFESSION OF CHRIST

Then Peter answered, saying: "We believe
That thou art Christ, Son of the living God."
Then said the Saviour unto Peter: "Thou
Art blessed Simon, son of Jonas, for
My Father hath revealed this unto thee,
And not a person having flesh and blood."

"I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and
Upon this rock I will erect my church.
The gates of hell shall never conquer it.
And I upon thee will bestow the keys
Of heaven's kingdom. What is bound on earth
By thee, shall also be in heaven bound."

"And whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth,
The same shall also be in heaven loosed."
He charged them to keep secret for the time,
That he was Christ; but from that hour began
He to make known to these few chosen ones,
What would befall him at Jerusalem."

How he would suffer at the ruler's hands,
And finally be killed, and raised again
The third day after he should meet with death.
But Peter said: "Lord, be it far from thee.
This shall not be to thee." Then Jesus turned
And cried: "Behind me Satan, take thy place!"

"Thou art a hinderer to me, because
Thou favorest the things that be of men,
And not the higher things that are of God."
Then said he to the twelve: "If any man
Will follow me, let him deny himself,
And take his cross, and so come after me."

"For whosoever will preserve his life
Shall lose it; but the one who for my sake
Will give up life, shall find it. What is man
Advantaged, if the world he should obtain,
And lose his soul? Or what shall one receive
As an exchange for an immortal soul?"

"In glory of the Father shall the Son
Of man with angels to the earth return,
And then according to each person's works
Shall be the recompense. But some of you
Now standing here, shall see before you die,
The coming of the kingdom of the Lord."

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

Six days from this with Peter, James and John
The Saviour climbed a mountain. There apart
From all the world, but nearer it would seem
To heaven and its bright inhabitants,
He held communion with his Father, while
His three companions, weary, fell asleep.

As Jesus prayed, the fashion of his face
Was altered and resplendent like the sun,
His raiment white as snow and glistening;
And with him Moses and Elijah talked,
Two holy ones who centuries before
Departed from the world, but still they lived.

These men now glorified conversed with Christ
About his death, which at Jerusalem
He should accomplish for our sinful race.
But Peter and the others when awake,
Beheld this vision of the better world,
And were beside themselves with ecstasy.

Then Peter hardly knowing what he said,
Exclaimed: "Lord, to be here is good for us!
Let us for each a tabernacle make."
He wished to keep those blessed visitants.
But while he spoke a cloud o'ershadowed them,
And as they entered it, they greatly feared.

From out the cloud there came a voice which said:
"This is my well beloved Son. Hear him!"
And when the voice had ceased, no one was seen
But Jesus only. It was better so.
The Master still was with them, and in him
Sufficiency was found for every need.

Next morning while descending from the mount,
The Saviour charged them, saying: "Speak to none
About this vision, till the Son of man
Be risen from the dead." But they, perplexed,
With one another questioned, what he meant,
In speaking of his rising from the grave.

The three disciples asked him why the scribes
Declared Elijah first must come to earth?
Then Jesus answered: "Truly he must come,
As it is written, to restore all things.
But unto you I say, the prophet came
Already, and the people knew him not."

"But they have done to him whate'er they pleased.
So shall they do unto the Son of man."
Then understood they that he spoke of John
The Baptist. When they reached the mountain's foot,
They saw a crowd assembled, and there came
A father greatly troubled for his boy.

THE LUNATIC HEALED

He cried, "O Lord, have mercy on my son
Who is a lunatic, and sorely vexed!
Oft times he falleth in the fire, and oft
He falleth in the water. I have brought
The lad to thy disciples, but in vain.
If thou canst help us, show thy favor, Lord!"

"O generation faithless and perverse!"
The Saviour cried: "How long shall I endure
Your ways? How long shall I abide with you?
To me let him be brought!" The Christ at once
Rebuked the spirit, and restored the child,
And to the father gave him sound and well.

Then secretly inquired his followers,
The reason of their failure in this case.
The Master said: "Because of unbelief.
With faith like to a little mustard seed
You might command this mountain to remove
From where it stands, and you should be obeyed."

THE TRIBUTE MONEY FOUND IN THE MOUTH OF A FISH

Collectors of the tribute money asked
Of Simon Peter at Capernaum:
"Does not your master pay the temple rate?"
And Peter answered, "Yes." When Christ returned
He said to Simon: "Do the kings of earth
Their families or other people tax?"

When Peter answered, "Others." Jesus said:
"Then are the children free." Which surely meant
That he was Son of God, and need not pay
The taxes to maintain his Father's house.
"But lest we should offend them, go," he said,
"And catch with hook and line a single fish."

"And thou wilt find concealed within its mouth
A shekel, which will serve for me and thee."
Presumably the Master was obeyed,
And Peter's faith in him was thus increased.
This incident reveals the poverty
Of Jesus and his humble followers.

THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM

About this time the twelve disciples came
To ask of Jesus who should greatest be
In the Messiah's kingdom. Then he called
A little child, and putting him within
The circle, said: "Ye can not enter in
The kingdom till ye undergo a change."

"Ye must as little children in your faith
And trust and purity of life become.
The childlike ones who have humility,
The same shall in the kingdom greatest be.
And any one receiving in my name
Such little ones receiveth me as well."

"Because of its offenses woe to earth!
For it must needs be that they should exist,
But woe be to the man by whom they come!
Take heed that ye despise not one of these
So humble, for I truly say to you,
Their angels do behold my Father's face."

HOW TO TREAT OFFENSES

"Moreover if thy brother 'gainst thee sin,
Go secretly and tell him of his fault.
If he will hear thee, thou hast gained the man;
But if he will not listen to thy words,
Take with thee one or two beside, to prove
That all that thou hast said to him is true."

"And if their counsel shall unheeded be,
Then let the matter come before the church;
And if he shall neglect to hear the same,
Thou hast thy duty done, and he may be
To thee as any other heathen man,
Or as the tax collecting publicans."

"If two of you upon the earth agree
Concerning any thing that ye shall ask,
It shall be of my Father done for you.
When two or three disciples in my name
Are met (no matter where the place may be),
There also am I in the midst of them."

Then Peter came, and asked: "How often, Lord,
Shall I forgive my brother, when he sins
Against me, shall it be till seven times?"
But Jesus answered: "Not till seven times,
But seventy by seven multiplied."
And then he spoke this parable to them.

"A certain king in calling to account
His servants, found a man who owed to him
Ten thousand talents, which he could not pay.
His lord commanded that he should be sold
With wife and children and all that he had,
And in this manner liquidate the debt."

"The servant falling at his master's feet
In attitude of worship, prayed that he
Would patient be, and he would pay him all.
The king was moved to pity by the sight
Of the distress of this unfaithful man,
And loosed him, and forgave him all the debt."

"But that same servant found a fellow man
Who owed to him a paltry hundred pence,
And laying violent hands upon his throat,
Demanded instant payment should be made.
This servant prayed with deep humility
For patience, promising to pay him all."

"No mercy would he show, but cast at once
The man in prison, there to be confined
Until the debt in toto should be paid.
His fellow servants in their sorrow came,
And told their master all that had been done
By him who had such boundless grace received."

"His lord then calling him before him said:
'Thou wicked servant! I forgave thee all
That debt at thy request. Why didst thou not
The same compassion to thy fellow show,
Forgiving others as I pitied thee?
Ye must receive the measure that ye mete!'"

"His lord in anger then delivered him
To the tormentors till the debt should be
Made good. So likewise shall my Father do
To you, if ye from out your inmost hearts
Forgive not one another's trespasses."
Again they set out for Jerusalem.

John said, "We found some person casting out
The demons in thy name, but as the man
Was not a member of our company,
We stopped him, for he followed not with us."
But Jesus said: "Forbid him not, for none
Who do such works can lightly speak of me."

As they were passing through Samaria,
Some messengers were sent before his face,
That all might be in readiness for him.
A certain village of Samaritans
Would not receive him, for they saw that he
Was on his way up to Jerusalem.

When James and John beheld their attitude,
Their indignation being great, they said:
"Lord, shall we follow in Elijah's steps,
And call down fire from heaven on their town,
And burn them up?" But Jesus answered them:
"Ye do not know the spirit ye are of."

"The Son of man came not to kill, but save."
They journeyed to another resting place.
The people of Jerusalem inquired
Where he might be, and many said of him:
"He is a good man." Others answered, "Nay,
The multitudes are quite deceived in him."

JESUS AT THE FEAST

Then Jesus at the middle of the feast
Ascending to the temple, taught the throng;
And many marveled at the wisdom shown,
And asked from whence his knowledge was derived,
For he had never studied in their schools;
Then Jesus said, "This doctrine is not mine,"

"But his that sent me. If a man will do
His will, the same shall know if what I teach
Is from myself, or has its source in God.
The one that speaketh of himself, but tries
To glorify himself; while he who seeks
The glory of the sender, must be true."

"Did not the law to you from Moses come?
Yet none of you have much regard for it.
Why is it that ye seek to murder me?"
The people said: "Thou art a man possessed,
For who among us seeks to take thy life?"
The Master answered, "I have done one work,"

"And ye have marveled. On the Sabbath day
In order that ye may observe the law
Which Moses gave you, one is circumcised.
Why are you then so sorely vexed with me,
Because upon the Sabbath I restored
A man diseased to perfect health and strength?"

"Do not be governed by appearances,
But rather let your judgment righteous be."
Some said, "Is this the man they seek to kill?
Behold he speaketh boldly, and no one
Prevents him! Do our rulers truly know
That this man is indeed the very Christ!"

"However, whence he is, to us is known;
But no man knoweth whence the Christ shall come."
Then Jesus cried: "Ye know me, and ye know
From whence I am! I came not of myself,
But have been sent by one who is the truth,
Whom ye know not, but who is known to me."

Then some of them desired to apprehend
The Saviour, but his hour had not yet come.
Among the people many trusted him,
And said: "When Christ shall come, will he perform
More miracles than those this man hath done?"
The Pharisees and chief priests heard these things.

They therefore sent some officers to take
Our Saviour as he taught the multitude.
They heard him say: "A little while am I
With you, and then I go again to him
Who sent me. Ye shall seek me, and not find,
For where I go, ye cannot follow me."

Then said the people, "Whither will he go,
That we may find him not? Will he depart
From us to teach the Gentiles, do you think?"
The great day of the feast, that is the last,
The Saviour stood, and cried: "If any man
Is thirsty, let him come to me and drink!"

"He that believeth shall be satisfied,
And shall himself become a living stream,
As saith the Scriptures." Many people said:
"This truly is the Prophet." Others said,
"This is the Christ." But some of them inquired:
"Shall Christ indeed come out of Galilee?"

"Hath not the Scriptures told us Christ will come
Of David's line and out of Bethlehem?"
A great dispute concerning him arose.
The officers returning to the priests,
Were asked why they had not arrested him.
They answered, "Never man like this one spoke."

Then said the Pharisees, "Are ye deceived?
Have any rulers in this man believed?
The people knowing not the law are cursed!"
Then Nicodemus answered, "Doth our law
Condemn a man before he shall be heard,
That what he doeth may be fully known?"

They answered, "Art thou, too, of Galilee?
Investigate. From Galilee will come
No prophet." Then each man went to his house;
But Jesus had no shelter for his head,
And so he with his little company
Reposed upon the slopes of Olivet.

JESUS SAVES A SINFUL WOMAN

The Master early in the morning came
Again within the temple courts, the crowd
Around him gathering, he taught them there.
The scribes and Pharisees broke on the scene
With an adulteress, whom they had caught,
To bait a trap, to catch him in his words.

They said to Jesus, "Master, here is one
Who was detected in the sinful act.
The law commands that such be stoned to death.
What sayest thou?" They asked this tempting him,
In order that they might accuse our Lord
Of cruelty, or speaking 'gainst the law.

But Jesus stooping, wrote upon the ground,
As though he heard them not, then when at last
They urged him, lifting up himself, he cried:
"Let him among you who is free from sin,
Be first to cast a stone at her!" And then
He stooped, and with his finger wrote again.

But they, convicted in their consciences,
Withdrew in silence, every one of them,
Beginning with the eldest to the last,
And left the woman standing by our Lord.
He rising from his bending posture, said:
"Where are the men that charged thee with this crime?"

"Hath none condemned thee?" "No man, Lord," she said.
Then Jesus answered, "I do not condemn.
Depart, and sin no more." Then Jesus cried:
"I am the world's illuminating source.
My followers shall not in darkness walk,
But in the light of life pursue their way."

But when they asked him who he was, he said:
"When ye have lifted up the Son of man,
Then shall ye know I am the promised one;
And that of mine own self I nothing do,
But speak the message by my Father taught,
And always do the thing that pleaseth him."

Among his hearers many now believed.
Then said the Master unto them, "If ye
Continue in my word, ye are indeed
My followers, and ye shall know the truth,
And it will make you free." Some answered him,
"We Jews are all the seed of Abraham."

"We never were in bondage. Tell us then
The meaning of 'The truth will make you free.'"
"I tell you truly," Jesus said to them,
"The one committing sin becomes the slave
Of sin. The slave abides not in the house
Forever, but the Son is ever there."

"If therefore by the Son ye are made free,
Ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye
Are Abraham's descendants, but ye seek
To take my life, because my word hath found
No place within your hearts. I speak to you
Of that which I have with my Father seen,"

"And ye do that which ye have seen with yours."
They answered, "Abraham our father is."
But Jesus said, "If ye were that man's sons,
Ye would be like your father in your deeds.
But now ye seek to kill the one who tells
You truth from God. This did not Abraham."

"Ye do your father's deeds." They answered him:
"We have indeed one Father, even God."
But Jesus said, "If ye were sons of God,
Ye would have love for me, who from him came.
Why is it that ye understand me not?
It is because ye cannot hear my words."

"Your father is the devil, and the lusts
That he delights in, ye will also do.
He always was a murderer, and he
Abode not in the truth, because indeed
There is in him no verity. He lies,
And doing so, he speaketh of his own."

"I tell the truth, and ye believe me not.
Which one of you convinceth me of sin?
Those who have come from God will hear his words.
Ye hear them not, so ye are not from him."
Then said the angry Jews: "Say we not well,
Thou art a fiend-possessed Samaritan?"

The Saviour answered, "I am not possessed.
I honor God, and ye dishonor me.
I tell you truly, if a man will keep
My sayings, he shall never taste of death."
Then said the Jews, "We know thou art possessed,
For all the holy men of old are dead."

"Art thou superior to Abraham
And all the prophets, which have passed away?
Whom dost thou represent thyself to be?"
He answered, "If I magnify myself,
It will amount to nothing; but instead
The one you call your God doth honor me."

"Ye have not known him, but I know him well.
If I should say I knew him not, then I
Should be untruthful like to some of you.
Your father Abraham rejoiced to see
My day, and when he saw it, he was glad."
Then said the Jews, "Hast thou seen Abraham?"

The Saviour answered, "Verily I say,
I was before the time of Abraham."
Then took they stones to cast at him, but he
Concealed himself, and passing through their midst
Unharmed, he went about his Father's work,
Secure until his task should be fulfilled.

SIGHT GIVEN TO ONE BORN BLIND

As Jesus passed, he saw a mendicant
Who had been blind from birth. His followers
Then asked him, saying: "Master, who did sin,
The parents of this man, or he himself,
That caused him to be born with sightless orbs?"
They thought more of the cause than of the cure.

The Master told them, it was not because
Of the transgressions of the sufferer,
Nor of his parents that the man was blind;
But rather that through him might be revealed
The works of God. "I must, while day remains,
Perform the works of him who sent me here."

"The night will come in which no man can work.
While I am in the world, I am its light."
When he had spoken thus, he moistened clay
And with it he anointed the man's eyes;
Then said to him: "Go to Siloam's pool
And wash." He did so, and received his sight.

He was so changed his neighbors knew him not.
The face so blank before was filled with light,
And joy was rioting within the eyes
Just opened to the glories of the world.
Some said, "It is the man who sat and begged."
While others thought he but resembled him.

But he acknowledged that he was the same.
Then they inquired how he received his sight.
He answered, "One called Jesus made some clay,
And put it on my eyes, and said to me:
'The pool Siloam seek, and wash thyself.'
Obeying his command, I washed, and see."

They asked where Jesus was. He did not know.
They brought him to the Pharisees, because
It was upon the Sabbath that the Christ
Prepared the clay, and gave the man his sight.
They said, "This person cannot be of God,
Because he keepeth not the Sabbath day."

They asked the man, "What sayest thou of him?"
"I think he is a prophet," he replied.
But they would not believe he had been blind,
Until they called his parents, and inquired:
"Is this your son, and was he sightless born?"
They answered, "This is certainly our son."

"We also know that he was blind from birth;
But by what means his sight has been restored
We cannot tell, but as he is of age,
Inquire of him, and he will answer you."
They called the man again, and said to him:
"The praise for healing give to God alone."

"This Jesus is a sinner, we are sure."
He answered, "Whether he be so or not
I cannot tell, but this one thing I know,
That I was blind before, and now I see."
They asked him once again what Jesus did.
He answered, "I have told you all I know."

"Why is it that ye wish to hear again?
Desire ye to become his followers?"
They said, "Thou art his follower, but we
Have Moses for our teacher; for we know
That God communed with him, but as for this
Man, Jesus, we know not from whence he is."

He answered, "This is truly marvelous.
He gave me sight, and yet ye do not know
From whence he cometh. God hath not respect
To sinners, but to those who do his will.
No man hath ever done such miracles.
If he were not of God, he naught could do."

"Dost thou, who wert in sin brought forth, teach us?"
The Pharisees rejoined; and cast him out.
When Jesus heard they had so treated him,
He finding him, inquired if he believed
Upon the Son of God. The man replied:
"Who is he, that I may believe in him?"

Then Jesus said, "Thou hast beheld his face,
And he it is who talketh now with thee."
"Lord, I believe," he said, and worshiped him.
Then said our Lord, "For judgment am I come,
That they who see not may behold the light;
While those who think they see may blind become."

Some Pharisees who heard his words, inquired:
"Are we then blind?" The Saviour answered them:
"If ye were blind, ye would be free from sin;
But as ye say 'We see,' your fault remains."
Then as the Master thought of these blind guides
His heart went out to all the straying ones.

CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The Saviour said, "The one who enters in
The sheepfold, without coming through the door
By climbing into it some other way
Is but a thief and robber. While the one
Who by the door finds access is indeed
The shepherd and protector of the flock."

"To such the porter openeth the door.
The sheep will hear his voice, and follow him.
He calleth every one of them by name.
He leadeth them, by walking on before;
But they will not be led of strangers thus,
Because their voices are unknown to them."

These words of Jesus were not understood,
And so he spoke more plainly unto them.
"I am myself the sheepfold's door," he said,
"And all that came before me were as thieves
And robbers, but the sheep obeyed them not.
If any enter in by me, the door,"

"He shall be saved, and shall go in and out
And pasture find. The thief comes but to steal,
And kill; but I am come to give them life,
A more abundant life than they have known.
The shepherd who is good will give his life
To save his sheep, and such a one am I."

"The hireling when he sees the wolf will flee,
And leave the sheep to their discomfiture.
I know my sheep, and I am known of mine.
I know the Father, and he knoweth me.
I sacrifice my life to save the sheep.
Still other sheep I have not of this fold;"

"Them also must I bring, that they may hear
My voice, and into one inclosure come,
That all may be beneath one shepherd's care.
Because I sacrifice my life for them,
My Father loves me. I relinquish it,
And lay it down, to take it up again."

"No man can take it from me. I myself
Will give it up, and take it back again;
For thus My Father hath commanded me."
The Jews could not agree among themselves.
Some said, "He hath a devil and is mad!
Why listen to him?" Others made reply,

"These are not words of one who is possessed.
How can a devil open blind men's eyes?"
Though some rejected him, the Saviour found
Not far away in little Bethany,
Which nestled on the slope of Olivet,
Warm friends who always gladly welcomed him.

MARY SITS AT JESUS' FEET

'Twas there one sister, Mary, at the feet
Of Jesus sat, and listened to his words;
While Martha rendered service to our Lord.
When so engaged, the latter came to him,
And said: "Dost thou not care that Mary hath
To me alone left all the drudgery?"

"Command her therefore that she serve with me."
But Jesus answered, "Martha, Martha, thou
Art full of care concerning many things.
But one is needful, and thy sister hath
The better portion chosen, which, indeed,
No one can ever take away from her."

THE SEVENTY SENT OUT

Beside the twelve apostles, Jesus chose
And sent out five and thirty embassies
Of two men each, to visit every town
Where he himself would follow, charging them
As he had done the twelve, to nothing take;
But heal, and say: "The kingdom is at hand."

These seventy returned to him with joy.
They said, "Lord, even demons through thy name
Were subject to us." Then the Lord replied,
"I saw from heaven Satan swiftly fall
Like lightning from the skies. Be not afraid,
For there is nothing that can injure you."

"That spirits have been subject unto you
Rejoice not. But be glad because your names
Are registered in heaven. Blessëd are
The eyes that see the things which ye behold;
For many kings and prophets longed to see
These things, but it was not their privilege."

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

A certain lawyer tempting Christ, inquired:
What he should do to have eternal life.
When asked what had been written in the law,
He answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
With all thy heart and soul and strength and mind,
And love thy neighbor as thou dost thyself."

The Master seeing that he answered well,
Replied to him: "This do, and thou shalt live."
But he, to justify himself, inquired:
"Who is my neighbor?" Then the Saviour said,
"A certain man went from Jerusalem
To Jericho, and was beset by thieves."

"These stripped him of his raiment, wounded him,
And then departed, leaving him half dead.
By chance there came a certain priest that way,
Who seeing him, passed on the other side.
A Levite likewise coming to that place,
Beheld and on the other side passed by."

"But a Samaritan in journeying
Along that road, beheld the injured man,
Approached, and in compassion dressed his wounds,
Anointing them with healing oil and wine;
Then helping him to mount upon his beast,
He walked beside him till they reached an inn."

"He there took care of him, and when he left,
He gave the landlord money, charging him
To care well for the patient, promising
On his return to pay all he might spend.
Which think you of these three was to the man
A neighbor, when he fell among the thieves?"

The lawyer answered, "He that mercy showed."
Then said the Master, "Go, and likewise do!"
When Christ was praying in a certain place,
He was requested by one of his band
To teach them how to pray. He gave again
That form of prayer which is called the Lord's.

IMPORTUNITY IN PRAYER

That they should pray without discouragement,
He added: "Which of you shall have a friend,
And shall at midnight go to him, and say:
'Please lend to me three loaves. A friend of mine
Has from a journey just arrived, and I
Have nothing in the house to offer him.'"

"But from within this answer you receive:
'Disturb me not! My door is made secure!
My children are in bed with me, so I
Cannot arise to give you!' Though he will
Not grant your wish because he is your friend,
Your importunity will conquer him."

"He will arise, and give you all you need.
I tell you, he that asketh shall receive.
Are not five sparrows for two farthings sold?
Yet God forgets not even one of these.
He numbers all your hairs, so fear ye not;
More dear are ye to him than many birds."

THE RICH FOOL

One made request of Jesus, that he bid
His brother the inheritance divide
With him. The Master asked, "Who made me judge
Or a divider over you?" And then
He said, "Beware of avariciousness!
For life consists not in the things possessed."

"A rich man's ground brought forth abundantly.
He said, 'What shall I do? I have no room
In which to store my fruits. I will replace
My barns with greater, and will there bestow
The riches of my harvests, and will say:
O soul of mine, in future take thine ease!'"

"'Thou hast provision made for many years.
Be merry! Eat and drink!' But suddenly
God said to him: 'Thou fool! This very night
Thy soul shall be required of thee! Then whose
Shall the provision be that thou hast made?'
Like this are those possessing treasure here,

"But having nothing in the sight of God.
The ravens have no storehouses or barns;
They neither sow nor reap. God feedeth them.
Are ye not more important than the birds?
Then seek ye first the kingdom of the Lord,
And every needed blessing shall be yours."

"Then gird yourselves, and let your light be bright,
And be like servants waiting for their lord,
When he shall from the wedding feast return,
That they may open to him instantly.
And blessëd when he comes shall all those be
Found watching. They shall sit at meat with him."

"Their lord will show them honor, serving them.
If in the second watch or in the third
He shall arrive, and find them waiting him,
Then blessëd are those servants. If one knew
The hour a thief would come, he surely would
Be vigilant in guarding his abode."

"Then be ye also ready, for like this
The Son of man will unexpected come."
When Peter questioned, "Is this meant for all?"
The Master made this indirect reply:
"The lord his faithful steward will reward,
And make him ruler over all his house."

"But if that servant say within his heart,
'My lord is putting off his coming home,'
And shall mistreat his fellow menials,
And spend his time in rioting and feasts,
His lord will come when he is not aware,
And separate him from his faithful ones."

"The servant that knows well his master's will,
But disregards it, many stripes shall have;
While he who disobeys, not knowing it,
Shall have but few. To whomsoever much
Is given, of that one is much required."
Thus ended his address on watchfulness.

Some told him of the Galileans, that
By Pilate had been killed; so that their blood
Was even mingled with their sacrifice.
Then Jesus said, "Suppose ye that those slain
Were sinners above all their countrymen,
Because they met with such a fearful death?"

"I tell you, nay: except ye shall repent,
Ye shall all likewise perish. The eighteen
On whom the tower of Siloam fell,
And killed them; think ye that these men were worse
Than all their fellows in Jerusalem?
Not so: unless ye shall yourselves repent,

"Ye shall all likewise perish." Then he spoke
This parable. "A fig tree 'mid the vines
Within a vineyard grew, but nothing bare.
The owner to his steward said one day:
'This tree three seasons hath produced no fruit.
It is a cumberer, so cut it down!'"

"The servant answered, 'Give it one more chance,
Till I shall loosen and enrich the soil.
If then it beareth fruit, it shall be well;
If not, then after that it shall be felled.'"
A fearful warning this for any one
Who year by year in fruitlessness exists.

A WOMAN MADE STRAIGHT ON THE SABBATH

As Christ was teaching on the Sabbath day
Within a synagogue, a woman bowed
With an infirmity, which she had borne
For eighteen weary years (so that she now
Found it impossible to lift herself),
Was there to get some comfort from her God.

The Master saw, and bade her come to him.
And then he placed on her his healing hands,
Remarking as he did so: "Thou art loosed
From thine infirmity." She stood upright,
And glorified the God of Israel.
But some were there who did not share her joy.

The ruler of the synagogue exclaimed
In indignation: "Are there not six days
In which men ought to labor? Therefore come
For healing on some other day than this!"
The Master said to him, "Thou hypocrite!
Upon the Sabbath day you loose an ox

"From out the stall, that he may quench his thirst.
Then should not this one sprung from Abraham,
(By Satan bound for all these eighteen years)
Be freed from bondage on the Sabbath day?"
His adversaries overwhelmed with shame,
Could find no words with which to answer him.

A CASE OF DROPSY HEALED ON THE SABBATH

A noted Pharisee invited Christ
To dine with him upon the Sabbath day.
This was not done with any kind intent,
But rather to observe his words and deeds.
Though well the Master knew why he was called,
He would not lose the opportunity.

A man with dropsy was before him placed,
To call forth Jesus' loving sympathy.
The Master asked the scribes and Pharisees,
If healing on the Sabbath lawful was?
But they were silent, making no reply.
Then Jesus cured the man, and let him go.

He said, "Which one shall have an ox or ass,
Which on the Sabbath falleth in a pit,
And will not pull him out upon that day?
A man is surely better than a beast!"
Not one of them could make reply to him.
He then observed the manners of the guests.

They were consumed by selfishness and pride.
He said, "When one invites you to a feast,
Select not for yourselves an honored place;
For fear the host may come to you and say:
'Give up your seat to this more worthy man.'
And thou with shame then take the lowest place."

"But choose instead the least exalted seat,
That when the entertainer comes, and says:
'Friend, come up higher to a better place!'
Then thou shalt rise in everyone's respect.
He who exalts himself shall be abased;
While he who humbles self shall higher rise."

Then turning to the host, he said to him:
"When thou wilt give a feast, call not thy friends
Or kindred or rich neighbors, fearing lest
They recompense thee, bidding thee again;
But call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind,
By whom thy favor cannot be returned."

"But thou shalt have a recompense at last,
And be rewarded in the life to come."
Then one of them that sat at meat with him
Remarked: that he should truly blessëd be,
Who at the feast above should be a guest.
Then Jesus spoke this parable to them.

THE PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER

"A nobleman invited many guests
To grace a wedding given for his son.
He sent his servants out at supper time,
To tell the bidden ones to come, for now
All things were ready. But with one accord
They all began to seek for an excuse."

"'I have to go to see some land I bought.
Accept of my excuse,' replied the first.
Another said, 'I purchased recently
Five yoke of oxen, which I go to test;
Excuse me.' 'I regret,' a third replied,
'My marriage will prevent my being there.'

"The servants told their master all these things.
He being angry, then commanded them
To quickly seek the city streets and lanes,
And bring the poor, the maimed, the halt, the blind.
They did so, but they found there yet was room
In the great banquet-hall for other guests.

"Then to the highways were the servants sent
With orders to compel all they might find,
To hasten to the feast. And this they did;
And so at last the banquet hall was filled.
But when the lord came in to see his guests,
He found one there not properly attired.

"He said to him, 'How camest thou in, friend,
Not having on the proper wedding garb?'
The man was speechless, having no excuse.
Then said the lord to his attendants: 'Take
This person, and eject him from the hall!'
The called are many; but the chosen few."

CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS MUST BEAR THE CROSS

Once when a multitude was at his heels,
The Master turned, and said: "Unless a man
Shall take his cross, and bear it after me,
He cannot be my follower. Which one
Intending to erect a tower, doth
Not first compute the outlay for the same,

"To see if he have means to finish it.
Lest after he hath the foundation laid,
Not being able further to proceed,
All that behold it, laugh at him, and say:
'This man began a building to erect,
But was not able to complete the work.'

"What king intending to attack a foe,
That sitteth not first down in conference,
To see if he with but ten thousand troops
Can overcome his foe with twice that sum?
Or else before the other cometh near,
He sends an embassy, desiring peace."

"So likewise whosoever he may be,
Who is not willing to relinquish all
He hath, cannot become my follower."
As many publicans and sinners came
To hear his words, the Pharisees complained.
Then Jesus spoke three parables to them.

THE LOST SHEEP

"What shepherd, if he have a hundred sheep,
On learning one of them has gone astray,
Will he not leave the nine and ninety safe
Within the fold, while he goes out to seek
The lost one on the mountains, till he find,
And bring it on his shoulder safely home?"

"Then he will call his friends and neighbors in,
And say to them: 'Rejoice with me, for I
Have found the wanderer!' I say to you,
That joy like this shall be in heaven o'er
One sinner that repenteth more than for
The righteous ninety-nine, who need it not."

THE LOST COIN

"What woman if she lose a silver piece
(But one of ten she wore as ornaments)
Will she not light a candle, sweep the house,
And diligently seek it, till she find?
And having found it, will she not invite
Her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her?"

"I say to you, there likewise shall be joy
Among the angels over every one
Who for his sins repenteth." Then he drew
That picture of the prodigal, which shows
The fulness of the love of God for men;
A love which we can hardly comprehend."

THE PRODIGAL SON

The money was a tenth, the sheep but one
Out of a flock; this son was one of two
By an indulgent father dearly loved.
It was the younger of the sons that asked
His father to bestow upon him that
Which would in course of time become his own.

The father yielded to the youth's request.
Then with his fortune leaving home and friends,
He to a distant country took his way;
And there he wasted everything he had
By living riotously with a class
That preys on fools, and robs them of their all.

Through wine and wanton living all was lost.
Then when he looked to those who shared his wealth,
Not one was found who cared a straw for him.
A famine came; a time of dreadful want.
The wretched fellow hired himself to one
Who sent him in the fields, to feed his swine.

O, what a fall was that for Jewish youth!
But still he hungered, and desired to fill
Himself with husks such as the pigs did eat.
One day he thought of home. His wasted life
Was all before him spread. He seemed as one
Awaking from a dreadful dream. He cried:

"My father's hired servants have enough
And more than they require, while I, a son,
Am perishing of hunger in this land.
I will arise and go to him, and say:
My father, I have sinned most greviously
Against high Heaven and against thyself;

"I am not worthy to be called thy son,
But let me be thy servant!" He arose,
And started for the sweet old boyhood home.
But while he was as yet a great way off,
His father saw him, and to meet him ran,
And fell upon his neck with warm embrace.

He kissed him, and the youth began to say
The sentences which he had framed before
About his sin and his unworthiness;
But ere he finished, the glad father cried:
"Array him in the best robe that we have,
And bring a ring, and put it on his hand!"

"His feet adorn with shoes! The fatted calf
Prepare, and we will eat and merry be!
For this my son was dead and is alive;
Was lost to me, but now he has been found."
The mansion soon resounded with their joy,
And strains of music floated on the air.

The elder son on coming from the field,
And hearing laughter and the sounds of mirth,
Inquired the meaning of this joyousness.
He was informed his brother had returned,
And that his father had a feast prepared,
Because he had received him safe and sound.

The elder son was angry, and refused
To enter. So the father went to him
And begged him to come in, but he declined,
Remarking, "I have served thee many years,
Without transgressing ever thy command,
And thou hast never given me a kid,"

"That I might have rejoicing with my friends:
But just as soon as this thy son returned,
Who hath in dissipation spent thy wealth,
Thou hast the fatted calf prepared for him."
The father said, "My son, together we
Have ever lived, and all I have is thine."

"'Tis right that we make merry and be glad
For this thy brother was to us as dead,
And now, behold, he is alive again!
And he was lost, but now he has been found!"
So ends the story that has touched the heart
Of many wanderers, and drawn them home.

THE UNJUST STEWARD

The Master gave another parable,
To teach men for the future to prepare.
A nobleman possessed a steward, who
Had been accused of some dishonesty,
In caring for his master's property.
"Now what is this I hear concerning thee?"

His lord inquired. "Now render an account,
As thou no longer can this office hold!"
The steward pondered on his future course;
"My lord will take away my stewardship.
I cannot dig. To beg I am ashamed.
I am resolved to so conduct myself,

"That when I lose this place, I shall receive
A welcome into other men's abodes."
Then calling all the debtors of his lord,
He asked the first one: "How much owest thou?"
"I owe of oil a hundred measures, sir,"
The man replied. The steward said to him:

"Your bill shall be for only half that sum."
He asked the second, "How much is your debt?"
"Of wheat a hundred measures," he replied.
The steward then to gain his favor, said:
"Your bill shall be reduced to but four score."
He made in this way friends who cared for him.

His master could not help commending him
Because of shrewdness, looking thus ahead,
Providing for the future, though unjust.
It proved the children of the world to be
In some ways wiser than the sons of light.
The Saviour said, "Your money wisely use,"

"That ye may be received, when ye shall fail,
Within the everlasting home above.
He who is faithful in the little things,
Will prove the same, when put in charge of much;
And he that is unjust in what is small,
Will be the same in weightier affairs."

"If ye have not been faithful here below
With the unrighteous mammon in your charge,
Who will commit true riches to your care?"
Another parable he spoke to them
Which on the future throws a gleam of light,
And shows how wealth is frequently misused.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed
In purple and fine linen, and who fared
In a most costly manner every day;
While at his gate a helpless beggar lay,
Named Lazarus, desiring to be fed
With crumbs that from the rich man's table fell."

"The beggar died, but he was safely borne
By angels to a place with Abraham.
The rich man also died, and was interred;
But lifting up his eyes from the abode
Of torment, Abraham was seen afar,
With Lazarus reclining on his breast."

"He cried out, saying: 'Father Abraham,
Have mercy on me, and send Lazarus,
That he his finger may in water dip,
To cool my tongue, tormented in this flame!'
But Abraham replied, 'Remember, son,
Thou hast received thy blessings in thy life;'"

"'While Lazarus received his evil things.
But he is comforted, while thou art now
Tormented. And beside all this a gulf
Is now between us fixed; so that, indeed,
No one can pass from here to your abode,
And neither can they pass from you to us.'"

"Then said the man, 'I pray thee, father, send
This Lazarus to visit my old home,
Where I have still five brothers, that he may
Bear testimony to them, lest they come
To share with me this place of punishment.'
But Abraham made this reply to him:"

"'They have both Moses and the prophets' words.
Their teachings are sufficient.' But he said,
'Nay, father Abraham, if one should go
To them returning from the dead, they would
Repent.' But he was answered, 'If they hear
Not these, they would reject one from the dead.'"

THE SERVANT'S DUTY

"What husbandman will to his servant say,
When by and by he comes back from the field,
Where he has labored following the plow:
'Sit down to meat.' And will not rather say:
'Prepare for me, and wait on me, and then
Thou afterward shalt also eat and drink.'"

"And will his master thank him when he doth
The things that were commanded him to do?
I think not. Likewise when ye shall have done
All things that are commanded you, still say:
'Unprofitable servants are we all!
We nothing but our duty have performed.'"

TEN LEPERS CLEANSED

As Jesus went up to Jerusalem,
He passed directly through Samaria;
And as he entered in a certain town,
Ten lepers met him. Standing far away,
They raised their voices, and together cried
In chorus: "Jesus, Master, pity us!"

The Lord commanded them to go, and show
Themselves to priests, who judged of leprosy.
They might have said, "It is no use to go!"
But they obeyed, and as they went were healed.
Though doubtless every one was filled with joy
At his condition, only one returned

To thank the Master for the healing wrought.
This man on seeing what our Lord had done,
With shouts of joy gave glory unto God,
And coming back, he fell at Jesus' feet,
And thanked him. This was a Samaritan.
The Saviour asked, "Were not ten lepers cleansed?"

"Where are the nine? Except this stranger none
Of them returned, to give their praise to God."
"Arise!" the Master said to him, "and go
In peace. Behold thy faith hath made thee whole!"
How many since that day by Jesus cleansed,
Have failed to show their gratitude to him!

THE UNJUST JUDGE

The Master gave another parable
To show that men should pray, and never faint.
"Within a certain city was a judge
Who had no fear of either God or man.
A widow there residing came to him,
And said: 'Avenge me of my enemy!' "

"At first he would not listen to her cry;
But afterward he said within himself:
'Though I regard not man and fear not God,
Because this widow's oft repeated calls
May prove to be a weariness to me,
I will avenge her of her enemy.'"

"Now hear the verdict of the unjust judge!
And shall not God avenge his own elect,
Who make their supplications day and night?
I tell you that he will avenge them soon."
Another parable he spoke to those,
Who were content with their own righteousness.

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

"Within the temple went two men to pray.
A Pharisee and hated publican.
The former stood, and prayed thus with himself:
'I thank thee, I am not as other men,
Extortioners, unjust, adulterers,
Or even as that tax-collector there!'"

"'I fast two days each week, and I give tithes
To thee of everything that I possess.'
The publican was standing far away,
And would not even lift his eyes above,
But smote upon his breast, exclaiming: 'God,
Be merciful to me a sinful man!'"

"I tell you this man went down to his house
Forgiven rather than the other one,
Who did not feel the burden of his sins;
For every one that doth exalt himself
Shall be abased; while on the other hand,
He that is humble shall exalted be."

ONLY ONE CAUSE FOR DIVORCE

When some asked Jesus if for every cause
A man may put away his wife, he said:
"Have ye not read that God created them
At the beginning but a single pair?
A man shall therefore leave his parents, that
He may retain his wife, for they are one."

"What God hath joined let not man separate."
They asked, "Why then did Moses counsel us
To give a writing of divorce, and put
The wife away?" The Master answered them:
"It was because of hardness of your hearts,
He suffered you to put away your wives."

"But it was not in the beginning so.
If any man except for the one cause,
Unfaithfulness, shall put away his wife,
And shall another marry, he doth break
The seventh commandment; and the one who shall
Be married to the woman doth the same."

JESUS BLESSES LITTLE CHILDREN

Then parents brought their children unto him,
That he might put his hands on them and pray;
But when disciples sought to hinder them,
The Master said: "Permit the little ones
To come to me. Forbid them not, because
Of such as these is heaven's kingdom formed."

Then after blessing them, he went his way.
As he departed thence, behold there came
In haste a youth, who kneeled to him, and said:
"Good Master, what good thing shall I perform
In order to obtain eternal life?"
The Saviour asked, "Why callest thou me good?"

"But one alone is good, and that is God.
Thou knowest the commands: Do not commit
Adultery, or kill, or steal, or bear
False witness, or defraud; but honor thou
Thy father and thy mother." He replied:
"From childhood have I strictly kept all these."

When Jesus knew his character, he felt
A true affection for the noble youth;
But answered him: "Thou lackest yet one thing.
Dispose of all thou hast, and give the poor
The money thus obtained, and thou shalt have
A richer treasure in the future life."

"And come, and follow me!" The man was sad
At hearing this, for he was very rich,
And prized the things that money could procure,
More than he loved his God. So Jesus said:
"How hard it is for rich men to be saved!"
Which caused his followers astonishment.

They thought prosperity an evidence
Of heaven's blessing. But the Saviour said:
"A camel through a needle's eye can go
With greater ease than one possessing wealth
Can enter in the kingdom of the Lord."
On hearing this, they said: "Who can be saved?"

But Christ replied, "What is impossible
With men, must not be counted so with God;
For there is naught impossible with him."
Then Peter said, "We have forsaken all
To follow thee, what then shall we receive?"
Such questions must have tried the Master's soul.

The Saviour answered, "Verily I say
That every one that hath forsaken lands
Or parents, brothers, sisters, property,
Because of me, shall have a hundred fold;
And shall inherit everlasting life.
But many that are first shall be the last."

THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD

Then likened he his kingdom to a man
That was a vineyardist, who in the morn
Quite early went to seek for laborers;
And having found them, he agreed to pay
To each of them a penny at the close
Of day; and sent them to their vineyard tasks.

At nine o'clock again he sought the mart,
And finding there some others unemployed,
He sent them to his vineyard, promising
To pay them what should be a proper wage.
Again at noon and three o'clock he went
And did the same. Once more at five he went,

And finding there some workmen, he inquired:
"Why stand ye doing nothing all the day?"
They answered, "No one hath employed us."
He sent them also, saying: "Ye shall have
Whatever shall be right." At eventide
He bade his steward call the laborers.

And give to each his wages, paying first
The men who were engaged at five o'clock.
A penny was bestowed on each of these.
When those who had been called at early morn
Were told of this, they thought they should have more,
But they received a penny like the rest.

They murmured, saying: "Thou hast given these
Who in the vineyard but one hour have toiled
The same as thou hast paid the laborers
Who bore the burden and the heat of day."
The vineyardist replied, "I do no wrong.
Agreed ye not to labor for this sum?"

"Receive that which is rightfully your own,
And go your way. I give to those engaged
The latest just the same as unto you.
May I not with mine own do what I will?
Do you with envy eye the good I do?
The last shall be the first. The first the last."

THE REQUEST OF JAMES AND JOHN

While on his way up to Jerusalem,
The Saviour privately informed the twelve
That he, the Son of man, should be betrayed,
To be condemned by chief of priests and scribes,
Who to the Gentiles would deliver him,
To be reviled and scourged and crucified.

But on the third day he would rise again.
They failed to grasp the meaning of his words
So foreign to their notions of the Christ.
Then two disciples with their mother came,
The latter asking that her James and John
Might sit upon his right hand and his left,

When he should be established on his throne.
But Jesus said, "Ye know not what ye ask.
The cup that I must drink can ye partake,
And be baptized as I am?" They replied,
"We can." He answered, "Ye shall share my cup,
And like your master shall ye be baptized;"

"But places on my right hand and my left
Are not at my disposal, but shall be
For those for whom they were by God prepared."
The others were displeased with the request
Of James and John. But Jesus said to them:
"Ye must not like the Gentile princes be,"

"Who seek for places of authority;
But he who of your number would be chief,
Let him become the servant of the rest,
Just as the Son of man has come to serve
(Instead of being served) and give his life
A ransom for the lives of multitudes."

BLIND BARTIMAEUS

As Jesus passed through Jericho, a throng
Of eager pilgrims quite surrounded him;
But by the wayside sat a mendicant
In darkness wrapped. He heard the multitude,
And asked: "What noted person passes by?"
When told that it was Jesus, he exclaimed:

"O Lord, thou Son of David, pity me!"
The Saviour never more that way would pass.
It was the blind man's only chance, yet some
Requested him to hold his peace, but he
Instead of minding them, the louder cried:
"O Lord, thou Son of David, pity me!"

The Saviour heard his cry amid the din
Of many voices, and he bade them bring
The man to him. "Be of good cheer," they said,
"The Master calleth thee." The man arose,
And cast away his garment in his haste
To come within the reach of Jesus' hands.

"What shall I do for thee?" the Lord inquired.
Perhaps he thought the man would ask for alms.
But no. "Lord open thou my eyes!" he said.
Then Jesus with a touch restored his sight,
And he the happiest in all the crowd
Went leaping after Jesus in the way.

ZACCHAEUS, THE PUBLICAN

There was a little man in Jericho
Named Zacchaeus, who was surpassing rich;
For he was chief among the publicans.
He greatly wished to see the Saviour, but
Alas! the crowd about him was so dense,
That he could not obtain a single glimpse.

So running on before, he climbed a tree
Which spread its branches o'er the very path
The Master took. When Jesus came beneath,
He raised his eyes, and said to Zacchaeus—
Like some familiar friend:—"Make haste! Descend!
For you must entertain me at your house."

With joy unknown before, the publican
Descended to receive his visitor.
But some of those who saw this little scene
Now murmured, saying that the Lord had gone
To be a sinner's guest. Then Zacchaeus
Gave evidence of being wholly changed.

He stood and said: "Lord, I now give the half
Of all my goods to benefit the poor;
And if I anything from any man
Have wrongly taken, I restore four fold."
Then fell these cheering words from Jesus' lips:
"Today has come salvation to this house!"

"Here also is a son of Abraham.
The Son of man has come to earth to seek
And save the lost." Then Christ this parable
Related, for they neared Jerusalem,
And many thought the kingdom of the Lord
Would come immediately; so he said:

THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS

"A certain nobleman who went abroad,
That he might get a kingdom, and return,
Before he started on his journey, called
His servants, and committed to their care
Ten pounds, commanding them to use the same
Until he should be with them once again."

"Though citizens, who had no love for him,
This message to the Emperor dispatched:
'We will not have this man to reign o'er us!'
Yet he received the kingdom, and returned.
Then called he those to whom he money gave,
To hear how much each one had made with it."

"Then came the first, and said: 'Behold thy pound
Hath gained ten others.' And the king replied,
'Well done thou good and faithful servant! Thou
Hast faithful proved in little, so shall now
Have half a score of cities under thee.'
The second said, 'Thy pound increased to five.'"

"The king replied, 'Thou shalt be over five.'
Another said, 'My Lord, behold thy pound
Which I have in a napkin laid away.
I feared thee, for thou art a man austere.
Thou takest up that which thou laidst not down,
And reapest harvests that thou hast not sown.'"

"The king to him replied: 'Out of thy mouth,
Thou wicked servant, shall thy judgment be!
Thou knewest that I was a man severe,
Appropriating that I laid not down,
And reaping harvests where I had not sown.
Why placed thou not the money in the bank,

"'That I might have my own with interest?'
Then said he to the servants standing by,
'The money take away from him, and give
The same to him who has the greatest sum;
For more shall be bestowed on him that hath,
While he that hath not shall his little lose.'"

CHRIST'S ADDRESS IN SOLOMON'S PORCH

The Master then proceeded on his way.
'Twas winter, at the dedication feast
Within the temple at Jerusalem,
When in a porch called Solomon's, the Jews
Were grouped about him. "Keep us not in doubt,"
They said, "but tell us if thou be the Christ."

"I told you," said the Saviour, "but ye have
In spite of works done in my Father's name,
Which testify of me, believed me not.
As I have told you, ye are not my sheep.
My sheep will hear my voice, and follow me;
And I will give to them eternal life."

"They shall not perish, nor can anyone
Remove them from my Father's hand or mine.
Indeed my Father and myself are one."
Then as the Jews took stones to throw at him,
He said: "I from my Father showed to you
Good works, for which of them now stone ye me?"

They answered, "We desire to stone thee not
For helpful deeds, but blasphemy, because
Though human, thou pretendest to be God."
He asked, "Is it not written in the Word:
'I said that ye are gods, and all of you
Are children of the Highest?' If they then

"Were deities to whom God's message came,
Say ye of him the Father sanctified,
And sent into the world, 'Thou hast blasphemed!'
Because I said, I am the Son of God?
Believe the works, if ye believe me not,
That ye may know the Father is in me,

"And I in him." Again they sought to take
The Saviour, but his hour had not yet come.
Escaping from their hands, he went away
To Jordan, where at first John had baptized.
And many testified that all that John
Had said concerning Jesus had been true.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

The home at Bethany that Jesus loved,
Where Martha served, and Mary meekly sat
At his dear feet, was wrapped in deepest gloom;
For Lazarus, their brother, was so ill,
While Jesus, who alone could render aid,
Was now, it seemed, too far away to help.

The sisters sent a messenger to him,
To say: "The one thou lovest, Lord, is sick."
They did not ask him to return, and heal
Their brother; but they only told their grief,
And left it all with Jesus. He replied,
"This illness will not terminate in death,

"But to the praise of God it will redound,
And also to the glory of his Son."
Then after that the Saviour stayed two days
In that same place. Then said he to the twelve:
"Judea needs us. Let us now return."
They answered, "Master, only lately there

"The Jews desired to stone thee. Wilt thou go
Again where dangers threaten?" He replied,
"Are there not in the day twelve hours of light?
If in the day one walk, he stumbles not,
But if he walk at night, he may so do;
Because there is no light upon his path."

Then said he, "Lazarus, our friend, now sleeps."
Some answered, "If he sleep, he will do well."
They knew not that he so referred to death.
Then said he plainly, "Lazarus is dead.
And I am glad on your account that I
Was absent, that your faith may be increased."

"Now let us go to him." Then Thomas said,
"Let us return, that we may die with him."
When they had come to Bethany they found
Four days had passed since Lazarus was laid
Within his cold and silent resting place.
As Bethany was near Jerusalem,

The city friends came to the stricken home,
To comfort those in sorrow for their dead.
While Mary sat among the mournful guests,
Her sister Martha hastened forth to meet
The Master, saying when she saw him: "Lord,
Hadst thou been here, my brother had not died."

"And even now I know God will give
At your request whatever you may ask."
"Thy brother," Christ replied, "shall rise again."
"I know that he shall rise at the last day,"
Her trembling lips replied, while fast her tears
Were flowing, for it seemed so long to wait.

"I am the resurrection and the life.
He that believes in me, though he were dead,
Yet should he live; and whosoever lives
And trusts in me shall never die," he said.
"Believest thou this statement?" Jesus asked.
She answered, "I believe thou art the Christ,

"The Son of God that to the world should come!"
So saying, Martha hastened to the house,
And called her sister, Mary, secretly,
Informing her the Master had arrived,
And that he wished to see her. Quickly she
Arose, and hurried to the one she loved.

He had not entered yet the little town,
But waited in the outskirts, at the place
Where Martha met him. When their visitors
Observed her hasty exit, they inferred
That she would seek the tomb of Lazarus,
To ease her heart; and so they followed her.

When Mary met the Master, down she fell
Where she so loved to be, at Jesus' feet,
And said as Martha had: "Lord hadst thou been
With us, my brother had not passed away!"
Her tears and those of friends who followed her
So touched the heart of Jesus, that he wept.

Then some remarked, "Behold his love for him!
Could not this one who opened blind men's eyes
Have caused that Lazarus should not have died?"
The Saviour asked them, where he had been laid.
They bade him come and see, conducting him
To what had evidently been a cave.

A slab of rock was placed upon its mouth.
The Master said to them, "Remove the stone!"
This was too much for Martha's feeble faith.
She cried, "He has been dead four days!" Christ said,
"Did I not tell you, if you would believe,
That you should see the glory of the Lord?"

Then they removed the stone, and Jesus prayed
(His eyes upraised to heaven) with these words:
"I thank thee, Father, that thou hearest me.
I know that I am always heard, but for
The sake of those around I say it, that
They may believe that I am sent of thee."

Then with a voice that roused the very dead,
He called out strongly, "Lazarus, come forth!"
Then he that had been dead, in grave clothes swathed,
The summons to obey, in fetters came.
"Unbind and let him go!" the Master said.
Then many who had witnessed this believed.

THE COUNCIL OF THE PRIESTS AND PHARISEES

Then gathered the chief priests and Pharisees
In council, to consider what to do.
They said, "This man does many miracles,
And what do we? If he goes on unchecked,
The populace will soon believe in him;
Then will the Romans come and take our land."

Caiaphus, the high priest, then said to them:
"It is expedient that one should die
And not that the whole nation should be lost."
'Twas thus as chief of priests he prophesied,
That Jesus should give up his life to save
The nation. So they plotted for his death.

Then Jesus to a town called Ephraim
Upon the border of the wilderness
Retired with his disciples, there to dwell
Till Passover drew near; but some of those
Who early came up to Jerusalem,
To purify themselves before the feast,

Communed with one another: "Think you that
On this occasion Jesus will attend?"
For both the chief of priests and Pharisees
Commanded that if anyone should know
His whereabouts, the fact should be revealed,
In order to accomplish his arrest.

MARY ANOINTS JESUS

Six days before the time of Passover
The Saviour came again to Bethany,
Where in the house of Simon, who was called
The leper, was a feast prepared for him.
There Martha helped to serve as was her wont,
While Lazarus the banquet table graced.

What cause these people had for gratitude!
The host recovered from a living death,
Now sat at home, instead of wandering
An outcast, calling out, "Unclean! Unclean!"
And Lazarus who had been four days dead
Another witness was to Jesus' grace.

What wonder then that Mary took a pound
Of very costly spikenard ointment, which
With lavish hand she poured upon those feet
Which traveled far to bring her brother back.
Then with her hair she wiped the precious nard,
Till all the house was with the fragrance filled.

But one called Judas, who a traitor proved,
Inquired the reason of such wastefulness.
The ointment would have brought three hundred pence,
Which could have been bestowed upon the poor.
Then Christ commanded, "Do not trouble her,
For she hath kept this 'gainst my burying."

"The deed that she hath done to me is good.
The poor are always with you, when ye will
Ye can do good to them; but me ye have
Not always. Therefore I declare to you
Where e'er this gospel over all the world
Shall be proclaimed, this also shall be told."

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM IN TRIUMPH

The next day many from Jerusalem,
When they had heard of Jesus' near approach,
With leaves of palm to welcome him went forth.
They cried, "Hosanna! Blessëd is the king
Of Israel!" Then at the Lord's command
An ass was brought, on which the Saviour rode.

Some with their garments carpeted the way,
While others cast their palm leaves in his path;
All joining in the welcome jubilee,
Not knowing they fulfilled this prophecy:
"Tell Zion's daughter not to fear. Behold,
Thy King in meekness comes upon an ass."

Upon the slope of Olivet he paused.
He knew how little meant the people's praise;
And tears bedewed his cheeks as he beheld
The city, which in two score years should be
Encompassed by the enemy, and left
In ruins. Then in agony he cried:

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that slays
The prophets, stoning those commissioned thee,
How often as the hen collects her brood
Of downy little ones beneath her wings,
(To shield them from the hawk or storm or night)
Would I have gathered thee, but thou wouldst not!"

On entering the city, Jesus went
Not to the palace of the king as some
Supposed he would, but to his Father's house,
Which once again he purged, by driving out
All those who bought and sold within its courts,
And those exchanging foreign money there.

Then children in their innocency came,
And in the temple taking up the strain
Their elders started, shouted joyfully:
"Hosanna in the highest!" in his praise.
Some asked him to rebuke them, but he said,
"If they should hold their peace, the stones would cry."

THE BARREN FIG TREE

Then Jesus went to Bethany, and lodged;
But as in early morning he returned,
He saw a fig tree growing by the way,
And came to see if on it might be fruit;
But being barren, having only leaves,
He said: "Henceforth let no fruit grow on thee!"

At evening as they traversed once again
That path, they marveled to behold the tree
Which in the morning stood so proud and fair,
Now withered. Jesus said, "If ye have faith,
Ye may not only do such deeds as this,
But mountains shall remove at your command."

THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS

About this time, Christ in the temple said:
"A certain husbandman who had two sons
Requested of the first that he would go
And labor in his vineyard on that day.
He answered, 'I will not,' but afterward
Repented, and performed the task required."

"Then of the second son he made the same
Request. He answered, saying: 'Sir, I go.'
But never went. Which think you of these two
Performed his father's will?" They said, "The first."
The Master answered, "Those whom ye despise
Precede you in the kingdom of the Lord."

"The Baptist came proclaiming righteousness,
And ye would not believe; but publicans
And harlots gladly heard, and followed him.
But ye repented not when ye had seen
This thing, that ye might afterward believe."
And then he gave another parable.

THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN

"A certain vineyardist prepared his land,
And having planted it, he let it out
To husbandmen, and journeyed far away,
Remaining absent for a lengthy term;
But at the proper season he dispatched
A servant to receive the master's fruit."

"This man was beaten by the husbandmen,
And empty sent away. A second one
Received the same bad treatment at their hands.
Again a third was sent. They wounded him
And fruitless from the vineyard cast him out.
The patient landlord thought, 'What shall I do?'"

"'I now will send my only Son to them.
Perhaps they will have reverence for him.'
Instead of that they cried, 'The heir is here!
Let's take his life, and seize on his estate!
This vineyard shall become our very own.'
And so they cast him out and murdered him.

"What therefore will their lord do unto them?"
They answered, "He will certainly destroy
Those wicked men, and let his vineyard out
To others, who will give to him the fruits."
The Master answered, "Have you never read
About the stone the builders did reject,"

"How it at last became the corner's head?
This is the work of God, and in our eyes
Is marvelous. I therefore say to you,
The kingdom of the lord shall be removed
From you, to be bestowed on others, who
Shall give to God the rightful fruits thereof."

THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES QUESTION CHRIST

Then Pharisees came with Herodians
To catch him in his words. They said to him:
"We know that thou art true, and carest not
For man, but only to proclaim the word
Of God in truth. So freely let us know,
Should we to Caesar tribute pay or not?"

"Why tempt ye me?" the Master made reply.
"The tribute money show me," and they gave
To him a penny. Then he asked of them:
"Whose superscription and whose head are here?"
They answered, "Caesar's." Then he said to them,
"To Caesar therefore render Caesar's things;"

"But give to God that which belongs to him."
They marveled at his answer. Then there came
The Sadducees, who held the future life
Unworthy of their confidence. They said,
"A certain woman married seven men,
All brothers who in quick succession died."

"Now in the resurrection when they rise,
Which one shall have the claim to her, for here
The seven had her?" Jesus answered them,
"Because ye do not know the Word of God,
Nor realize His power, ye do err.
They of the resurrection marry not,"

"But like the holy angels shall abide.
About the resurrection read ye not
That which was spoken unto you by God?
Who said 'I am the God of Abraham,
The God of Isaac and of Jacob, too.'
He is the God of Living, not of dead."

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT

The Pharisees on hearing this were glad,
And one of them, a lawyer, asked of him
"Which is the great commandment of the law?"
He answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
With all thy heart and mind and soul and strength.
This is the first and greatest of them all."

"The second, 'Thou shalt love they neighbor as
Thou dost thyself,' is like the other one.
The law and prophets all depend on these."
Then Jesus asked them, what they thought of Christ.
"Whose son is he?" They answered, "David's son."
"Then why," he asked, "does David call him Lord?"

"'The Lord to my Lord thus expressed himself:
'Be seated on my right hand till I make
Thine enemies thy footstool.' David said.
If David call him Lord, how can he then
Be David's son?" No man could make reply,
Nor did they dare to further question him.

THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES REBUKED

Then said he to the multitude, "The scribes
And Pharisees now sit in Moses' seat.
All therefore that they bid you do, observe:
But do ye not according to their works,
For they neglect the things which they command.
They lay their burdens grievous to be borne,

"On other people's shoulders, but themselves
Will not a finger use to lift them up.
For all their works they do that men may see
Their piety. They love the honored seats
At feasts and synagogues, and like to hear
The people call them Rabbi in the marts."

Then how he lashed the scribes and Pharisees,
Pronouncing woe upon those hypocrites,
Who in the market places long would pray,
Pretending to be holy, that they might
Devour the helpless widow's property.
The greater condemnation should be theirs.

They closed the kingdom of the Christ to men,
Not entering themselves, nor suffering
Those who desired to enter, to go in.
They compassed sea and land for proselites,
And made them more infernal than themselves.
They paid their tithes of mint and garden herbs,

But more important matters of the law
Like judgment, mercy, faith, were overlooked.
They strained out gnats, and swallowed camels whole.
They were like dishes on the outside clean,
But fouled within with all impurity.
They were compared to whited sepulchers,

Which seemed so clean and beautiful without,
But inwardly were full of dead men's bones.
He likened them to vipers, poison snakes,
How could they then escape the wrath of hell!
Their God had sent them wise and righteous men,
And some they killed and others crucified,

That on them should come all the righteous blood
Of all the holy men from Abel's time,
Upon that generation all should fall.
'Twas thus the Master stirred the hornets' nest
Well knowing that the angry swarms would soon
Environ him, and sting him to the death.

THE WIDOW'S MITES

Then Jesus sat beside the treasury,
And watched the people putting in their gifts.
While some of them of their abundance gave
Large sums for temple service, lo, there came
A widow in her poverty, and cast
Two mites into the sacred money chest.

Two mites, a paltry farthing that was all.
Yet Jesus said, "She hath contributed
A larger sum than all the others have,
For they out of their fullness gave their gifts,
While this poor widow in her penury,
Hath given all the living that she had."

THE DISCIPLES ARE WARNED OF COMING WOES

The twelve to Jesus coming as he left
The temple, pointed out to him with pride
The stately buildings then erected there.
But Jesus said, "Do ye behold these things?
I tell you that there shall not here be left
One stone upon another undisturbed."

Upon the Mount of Olives they inquired
When this should be, and what should be the sign
Of his return, and also of the end
Of everything. The Master said, "Beware!
For men will come, declaring they are Christ,
And many people will be thus deceived."

He told them of the woes that should befall
Jerusalem from siege of enemies,
How earthquakes, famine, pestilence should come,
To be but the beginning of a swarm
Of troubles. Some of them should meet with death,
And all be hated for their Master's sake.

But those who should endure until the end
Should have salvation. When they should behold
The prophecy which Daniel gave fulfilled,
Then let those who were in Judea flee
For safety to the mountains; then should be
Great tribulation such as never was.

"But when they say, 'Lo, here is Christ, or there!'
Believe them not, for many such will come.
Like lightning flashing in the eastern sky,
And in an instant shining to the west,
Shall be the coming of the Son of man.
When all these tribulations shall be passed,

"The sun to darkness shall be turned. The moon
Shall fail to give her light. The stars shall fall.
The Son of man shall in the sky appear,
And then shall all the tribes of earth lament.
They shall behold him in great glory come,
In heaven's cloudy chariots conveyed."

"His angels shall be sent with trumpet blast,
To gather his elect from east and west,
And every part of earth beneath the sky.
Now from the fig tree learn a parable.
When ye behold it put forth tender leaves,
Ye know the summer season draweth nigh;

"So likewise when ye see these things fulfilled,
Ye may be sure the time is near at hand.
This gospel of the kingdom must be preached
To all the world, and then the end shall come.
The heavens and the earth shall pass away,
But unfulfilled my word shall never pass."

"No mortal knows about that day and hour,
And from the holy angels it is hid;
My Father only knows when it will come.
The Son of man shall at his coming find
Conditions as they were in Noe's time.
For as it was in days before the flood,

"When they were eating, drinking, marrying,
Until the day that Noe in the ark
Took refuge, and knew not until the flood
Came swiftly on them, bearing them away,
So shall the Son of man's returning be.
Then shall two men be working in the field,"

"One shall be taken and the other left,
Two women shall be grinding at the mill,
One shall be taken and one left behind.
Ye do not know the hour your Lord will come.
So watch, and ever ready be, for he
Will come when unexpected like the thief."

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

Then was his kingdom by our Lord compared
To virgins ten who with their lamps went forth,
To meet the bridegroom when he should return;
Of these one-half were wise, the others not,
Because they took no extra oil with them.
All wearied with their waiting, fell asleep,

These maidens were pretended friends of one
Who is the bridegroom, and they represent
All sleeping Christians. At the midnight hour
A cry was heard: "Behold, the bridegroom comes,
To meet him go!" Then all in haste arose,
And trimmed their wicks to make a brighter light.

The foolish said, "Please give us of your oil,
Because our lamps are out." But they rejoined
"If we should give, we should not have enough
For our own selves; but go to those who sell."
So while they went to buy, the bridegroom came;
Then those prepared with joy went in with him.

The door was shut, but afterward there came
The foolish, calling: "Master, let us in!"
But from within the bridegroom answered them:
"I know you not. Depart!" So ye must watch,
Because ye do not know the day nor hour
Wherein the Son of man will come again.

PICTURE OF THE JUDGMENT

When he shall in his majesty return
And with him all his great angelic throng,
Then will he on the throne of glory sit;
Before him all the nations of the earth
Shall be collected into two great bands,
As shepherds separate the sheep and goats.

The sheep shall occupy the right hand side.
The goats shall have their place upon the left.
Then to those standing on the right the King
Will say: "Ye blessëd of my Father, come,
Possess the kingdom which has been prepared
For you from the foundation of the world!"

"For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat;
And I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink.
I was a stranger, and ye took me in;
And naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick,
And me ye visited. Ye came to me
When I was in the prison." They replied:

"When have we ever seen thee hungry, Lord,
And fed thee? Or when did we give thee drink?
When as a stranger did we take thee in?
Or found thee naked, and provided clothes?
When saw we thee in sickness or in jail,
And came to thee?" The King shall answer them:

"I say to you, that inasmuch as ye
Have done it even unto one of these
My brethren, ye have done it unto me."
Then shall he say to those upon the left,
"Depart from me ye cursed into fire
Prepared for Satan and his company!"

"For I was hungry, and ye gave no meat;
Was thirsty, and ye gave to me no drink;
A stranger and ye did not take me in;
Was naked, and ye clothed me not; was sick
And in the prison ye neglected me."
Then shall they also answer him, and say:

"When have we ever seen thee hungry, Lord,
And did not feed thee? Or when thirsty, Lord,
Or as a stranger, naked, sick, in jail
And did not seek to minister to thee?"
The King shall say, "In that ye did it not
To one of these, ye did it not to me."

Then into everlasting punishment
These shall depart; but on the other hand
The righteous into everlasting life,
To gaze forever on the Saviour's face,
And share forever in his blessedness.
Oh happy lot of those upon the right!

SOME GREEKS SEEK JESUS

Among the worshipers at Passover
Were certain Greeks, who had a great desire
To see the Master. These to Philip said:
"Sir, we would see this Jesus, if we may."
Then Philip came with Andrew to our Lord,
And told him of the foreigners' request.

The Saviour answered them, "The hour is come
In which the Son of man is glorified.
Except a grain of corn within the ground,
Shall fall and die, it must abide alone;
But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.
The one that loveth life shall lose the same."

"He who regardeth not this earthly life,
Shall enter that which never hath an end.
Let any follow me who wish to serve,
And where I am, there shall my servant be;
And such shall of my Father honor have.
Now is my soul distressed. What shall I say?"

"Shall it be, Father save me from this hour?
But from this cause I to this hour have come.
O Father, glorify thy holy name!"
There came a voice from heaven which replied:
"I have so done, and will so do again."
The people did not know the voice of God.

"It thundered!" some exclaimed, while others said:
"It must have been an angel spoke to him."
But Jesus said, "This voice came for your sakes;
For now has come the judgment of the world,
The prince of it shall now ejected be.
And I, if I be lifted from the earth,

"Will draw all men to me." And this he said
To signify the manner of his death.
They questioned, "We have heard out of the law
That Christ abideth always, why then say:
The Son of man must be uplifted? Pray,
Who is this Son of man thou speakest of?"

The Master answered, "Yet a little while
The light is with you. While ye have it walk,
Lest darkness come upon you. He that gropes
In darkness, knoweth not the way he goes.
So while ye have the light believe in it."
These things he said, and hid himself from them.

Though he had done so many miracles
Before them, they would not believe on him.
Then to Caiaphas' palace came the scribes,
Chief priests and elders to contrive a plan
To capture Jesus by some subtility,
And kill him; but not at the Passover,

Because they feared disturbance from the crowd.
Then Judas, who was of the chosen twelve
And treasurer of their small company,
Agreed with the chief priests to sell his Lord
For thirty silver pieces. They were glad.
Then sought the traitor opportunity.

Now on the first-day of unleavened bread
The twelve disciples came to Christ and said:
"Where wilt thou that we shall prepare for thee
The Passover?" The Master answered them,
By sending John and Peter to the town,
To find the place, and make all ready there.

He said, "When ye shall enter in the gate,
A man will meet you with a water jar;
Him follow, and to the house-owner say:
'The Master asks, where is the room for guests,
That he may eat with his disciples there.'
Then he will show to you a furnished room,"

"An upper chamber, there the feast prepare."
They went, and found it even as he said:
And soon they had all things in readiness.
When in the evening Jesus and the rest
Arrived, his followers disputed who
Among them should have the preëminence.

JESUS WASHES THE DISCIPLES FEET

Forgetful of their blessëd Lord's command,
To prove their greatness by humility,
And serve each other, they had not obeyed,
And done one for another what they should;
So with their feet all travel stained they came,
To take their places at the paschal board.

Then Jesus knowing that his hour had come
When he should unto God, the Father, go;
And having loved his own upon the earth,
He loved them to the end. He knowing that
The Father had delivered all to him,
And that from God he càme, and should return,

He from the table rose, and laid aside
His garment, and with towel girt himself;
Then pouring water in a basin, he
Began to do the lowest servant's work.
He came to Peter, who astonished cried:
"My Lord and Master, dost thou wash my feet?"

Then Jesus answered, "That which I now do
Thou knowest not, but afterward shalt know."
But Peter said, "Lord, thou shalt never wash
My feet!" "Unless I wash thee," Jesus said,
"Thou hast no part with me." Then Peter cried,
"Lord, not my feet alone but hands and head!"

The Master answered, "Those already bathed,
Need but to wash their feet, and they are clean.
And ye are cleansed, but not each one of you."
So when he had performed this lowly task,
And had replaced his garment, and sat down,
He asked them if they knew what he had done.

"Ye call me Lord and Master, and do well,
For so I am. If I, your Master, then,
Have washed your feet, ye certainly should do
One for another what I did for you.
The servant is not greater than his Lord,
Nor messenger than he who sends him forth."

Then was the Master troubled in his soul,
And said: "I tell you truly, one of you
Will my betrayer be." Then were they sad,
And looked one on another doubtingly,
Not knowing which of them should do this thing.
Then Peter beckoned John to ask our Lord.

The favored one reclining on the breast
Of Jesus in an undertone inquired:
"Who is it, Lord?" The Master said, "The one
To whom I give this morsal." Then he dipped
And gave the sop to Judas, Simon's son,
Whose heart was from that time the devil's own.

Then Jesus said to him, "What thou shalt do
Be quick about it!" But none of them knew
For what intent he spoke this unto him.
Some thought because he was the treasurer,
That something should be purchased for the feast,
Or that he should give something to the poor.

Then out into the darkness Judas went,
To do his evil deed. The others ate
And drank with Jesus in that upper room.
Then having feasted, Jesus taking bread,
He blessed and brake it, saying as he gave:
"This is my broken body, take and eat."

He took the cup, and after giving thanks,
He gave it, saying: "Drink ye all of it.
Of the new covenant it is my blood
For many shed, to take away their sins.
No more shall I partake of it until
I in the kingdom drink it new with you."

"A little longer I remain with you,
Then shall ye seek me, and as I have said
To others, so to you I now repeat,
That whither I shall go ye cannot come.
But love each other as I you have loved.
Thus all shall know you as my followers."

Then Peter asked, "Lord, whither goest thou?"
The Saviour answered, "Where I go thou canst
Not follow me at present. By and by
Thou shalt come after me." Then Peter said,
"Lord, why may I not follow thee at once?
I will for thy sake sacrifice my life."

The Master answered, "Wilt thou die for me?
I tell thee truly, e'er the cock shall crow,
Thou shalt three times deny thou knowest me."
Then Jesus spoke to them those cheering words,
Which have been balm to countless anxious souls,
As well as to the ones who heard them first.

CHRIST COMFORTS HIS DISCIPLES

"Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe
In God, the Father, also trust in me.
Abodes are many in my Father's house,
(I would have told you, had it not been so)
I go, to there prepare a place for you;
And I will come and take you to myself;"

"That where I am, there ye may also be.
Ye know the place, and also know the way."
Then Thomas answered, "Lord, we know not where
Thou goest, so how can we know the road?"
"I am the way, the truth, the life," Christ said,
"None cometh to the Father but by me."

"If ye had clearly apprehended me,
Then should ye have my Father known as well;
From henceforth ye have him both known and seen."
Then Philip said, "The Father show to us,
And we will then be satisfied." But Christ
Astonished at his dullness, answered him:

"Have I been with you all this time unknown?
He that beholds me doth the Father see.
Why sayest thou, 'Reveal him unto us?'
Believest thou not that I am in him
And he in me? It is not I alone
That speak the words, and work the miracles."

"Believe me that I in the Father am,
And that the Father also is in me;
Or else believe me for the works I do.
I truly say to you, he that believes
Shall do like works and even greater deeds
Than these, because I to my Father go."

"And whatsoever ye shall in my name
Request, that will I do, in order that
The Father may have glory in the Son.
If ye have love for me, obey my words;
And I will pray the Father, who will give
To you an ever present Comforter,"

"The Spirit of the truth to dwell with you.
The world cannot receive nor know him, for
It doth not see him; but he shall be known
Of you, for he will with and in you dwell.
I will not leave you comfortless, but come
To you, and though the world shall see me not,"

"Yet ye shall see me, and because I live,
Ye shall also have life; and at that day
Shall know that in the Father I abide,
And ye in me and I in you. The one
That keeps my sayings proves his love for me;
And he shall have my Father's love and mine."

"And I will manifest myself to him."
Then Judas (not Iscariot) inquired:
"Lord, how wilt thou reveal thyself to us
And not to worldly people?" Jesus said,
"The one who loves me will obey my words,
And we will love him, and abide with him."

"He that neglects my teachings loves me not.
These sayings are the Father's, not my own.
These things I speak while I am yet with you.
The Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost,
The Father in my name will send to you.
He all my sayings to you will recall,"

"And teach you all things that ye need to know.
I leave with you my peace. I give to you
Not as the world on you bestows its gifts.
Let not your heart be troubled or afraid."
I said, "I go away, and come again.
If ye had love for me, ye would rejoice;"

"Because I to the Father now depart.
I tell you this before it comes to pass,
That when it is fulfilled, ye may believe.
I will not talk much after this with you,
Because the evil one who is the prince
Of this word cometh, and hath naught in me."

"Arise, and let us go." They sang an hymn,
And leaving that dear upper chamber passed
Out of the city gates and o'er the brook
Called Cedron, to the side of Olivet,
Through vineyards which gave rise to the discourse
Which follows of the branches and the vine.

THE RELATION OF JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES

"I am the true vine, and my Father is
The husbandman, and every branch in me
That fruitless is, he taketh it away;
And cleanseth every branch that beareth fruit,
In order that it may more fruitful be.
Now are ye purified through words I speak."

"Abide in me, and I will dwell in you;
For as the branch can bear no fruit alone,
No more can ye unless ye cling to me.
I am the vine and ye the branches are.
He that abides in me and I in him,
The same shall bring forth fruit abundantly."

"Without your Master ye can nothing do.
If any man abideth not in me,
He shall be cut off like a withered branch,
Such as are gathered for the fire, and burned.
If ye abide in me, and my commands
Abide in you, ye what ye will shall ask,"

"And it shall be according to your wish.
My Father will be glorified, if ye
Are very fruitful, and so shall ye be
My followers. I love you even as
The Father hath loved me. Continue ye
To dwell within the sunshine of my love."

"If ye keep my commands ye shall abide
In my affection, even as I kept
My Father's words, abiding in his love.
I tell you this that in you may remain
My joy, and that your gladness may be full.
And this is my command, each other love,"

"In the same manner that I you have loved.
A greater love can no man show than this,
That he relinquish life to save his friends.
Ye are my friends, if ye do my commands.
Henceforth I do not call you servants, for
The servant knoweth not his lord's designs;"

"But I have called you friends, for all the things
Which I have of my Father heard, have I
Made known to you. Ye have not chosen me,
But I selected you, and you ordained,
That ye should bring forth fruit abundantly,
And that it be of the enduring kind;"

"In order that whatever ye request
The Father in my name, may be attained.
And I command you, one another love.
If hated by the world remember that
It hated me before so treating you.
The world would love you if ye were its own;"

"But now because ye are not of the world,
(For out of it you have selected been)
It therefore hateth you, I told you that
The servant is not greater than his lord.
The world will treat you as it treated me.
If they have kept my word, they yours will keep."

"But unto you they will do all these things
For my name's sake; because they have not known
My Father, who hath sent me to the world.
They would have had no sin, had I not come;
But now they have no cloak to hide their faults.
Those hating me dislike my Father, too."

"If I among them had not done the works
Such as no other person ever did,
They would not have had sin; but they have seen,
And hated both my Father and myself.
This has been done, that it might be fulfilled
As written: 'They have causeless hated me.'"

"But when the promised Comforter shall come,
That is the Spirit of the truth whom I
Will from my Father send to you, then he
Shall testimony bear concerning me.
And ye shall also be my witnesses,
Because ye have been with me from the first."

"I tell you these things so that by and by
Ye may not be offended. They will turn
You out of synagogues, yea: even think
In killing you that they are serving God;
And these things will they do to you because
They have not known the Father or myself."

"But ye will bear in mind these words of mine,
And that I told you that it should be so.
I now return to him who sent me forth,
And none inquireth: Whither goest thou?
For sorrow hath completely filled your hearts,
Because I have made known these things to you."

"Yet truly it is better that I go
Away from you, for if I should remain,
The Comforter would absent be from you;
But I will send him, when I shall depart.
And when he comes, he will reprove the world
Of sin, of judgment and of righteousness."

"Of sin, for they have not believed on me.
Of judgment, for the prince of earth is judged.
Of righteousness, because I now return
To him who sent me, to be seen no more.
I have yet many things to say to you
Which ye are not now able to endure,"

"But when the Spirit of the truth shall come,
He will conduct you into all the truth;
For of himself he shall not witness bear,
But speak concerning that which he shall hear;
And he will show you things that are to come.
Of mine he shall receive, and show it you."

"For everything the Father hath is mine,
And so I said, he shall of mine receive
And show the same to you, my followers.
A little while and ye shall see me not.
Again a little while, and ye once more
Shall see me, for I to my Father go."

Then some of them inquired among themselves,
"What is this that he saith? 'A little while.'
We cannot tell the meaning of his words."
The Master knew their thoughts, and said to them:
"Ye shall lament, though many will rejoice;
But soon your sorrow will be turned to joy."

"Ye now have sorrow, but ye soon again
Shall see me, and your heart will then be glad;
And no one shall remove your joy from you.
Then ye will have no need to ask of me,
For whatsoever ye shall in my name
Petition of the Father, he will give."

"Ye have not in my name made your requests
Thus far, but ask, and ye shall have your wish,
In order that your joy may be complete.
These things have I to you in proverbs said,
But by and by the time will come when I
Will manifest the Father unto you."

"Ye shall then in my name make your requests,
And it is needless that I say to you,
That I for you the Father will beseech,
Because he loves you for your love to me,
And your belief, that I came forth from God,
I from the Father came into the world,"

"And now I from the world return to him."
His followers then said to him, "Lo, now
Thou speakest plainly, and we are assured
Thou knowest all things; and we do believe
That thou art come from God." The Master said,
"Believe ye now? Behold the hour will come,"

"Yea, now is here, when every one of you
Will scatter from me, leaving me alone;
And yet I will not be alone, because
The Father with me is. Ye in the world
Will tribulations have, but peace in me.
Fear not, for I have overcome the world!"

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR HIS DISCIPLES

Then Jesus raised his eyes, and thus he prayed:
"The hour is come, O Father, glorify
The Son that he may make Thee glorious.
Thou hast bestowed on him authority
To give to those whom thou hast given him
The life that shall forever more endure."

"For this is life eternal thee to know,
And also Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.
Upon the earth I have thy glory shown,
And finished all thou gavest me to do.
Now Father, glorify me with thyself
With the same glory that I had with thee,"

"Before the world into existence came.
I have declared thy name to all of those
Whom thou hast given me out of the world;
They were thine own, and them thou gavest me;
And they have kept thy word, and they have known
That what thou gavest me has come from thee."

"The words thou gavest me, I gave to them.
They have received thy words, and been convinced
That I have come from thee, and have believed
That thou didst send me. I implore for them,
I pray not for the world, but for the ones
Which thou hast given me, for they are thine."

"And all of mine are thine, and thine are mine;
And I am glorified in them. And now
I come to thee. But these are in the world.
O holy Father, keep through thine own name
All those that thou hast given me, that they
May be united as we are in one."

"While in the world I kept them through thy name;
And none of those thou gavest me is lost
Except perdition's son, in order that
The Scripture might be perfectly fulfilled.
I speak these things while in the world, that they
May have my joy fulfilled within themselves."

"They are not of the world as I am not;
And so the world hath hated them. I pray
Not that thou shouldst remove them from the world,
But from the evil to preserve them here,
And sanctify them through thy word of truth.
I send them to the world as I was sent."

"And for their sakes I sanctify myself,
That they might be made holy through thy truth.
For these alone I pray not, but for those
Who through their teaching shall believe on me,
That they may all be one as we are one,
As thou in me and I in thee abide,

"May they be one in us, in order that
The world may know thou hast commissioned me.
The glory that thou gavest me I give
To them, that they may be as we are one;
Myself in them, and thou in me, that they
May be brought into perfect unity."

"Then shall the world perceive thou hast me sent,
And loved them even as thou hast loved me.
And I desire, O Father, that the ones
Whom thou hast given me may with me be,
That they may see my glory; for before
The world was founded I was loved of thee."

"O righteous Father, by the world unknown,
But known of me; and these have also known
That thou hast sent me; and to them have I
Declared thy name, and will declare it still;
That the same love wherewith thou hast loved me
May in them be in company with me."

GETHSEMANE

Thus spoke the Master, then to tread alone
The wine-press for us, led his followers
Within a garden called Gethsemane;
And there among the ancient olive trees
He drank the cup of wormwood and of gall
More bitter than by mortal ever drained.

He made request of Peter, James, and John,
That they would watch with him, because his soul
Was sorrow smitten even unto death.
But overcome with drowsiness they slept.
Not far from them he fell upon his face,
And sweat in agony great drops of blood.

"He made his soul an offering for sin."
What mind can grasp the meaning of these words,
Or estimate the load that bore him down,
When all the sins of earth upon himself,
The Lamb of God, were laid, to bear alone
In the dark garden of Gethsemane?

He prayed, "My Father, if it may be so,
This cup remove from me. But yet I would
Not have my will, but pray that thine be done."
He came, and found his followers asleep,
He said to Peter and the others, "What,
Could ye not watch with me a single hour?"

"That ye escape temptation, watch and pray!"
And then the Saviour went and prayed again,
Repeating the petition as before,
And adding: "Not according to my will,
But thine be done." And this he did three times,
And came and found them all asleep again.

It was too late to sympathize with him.
Their opportunity had passed away.
He knew their spirit's willingness to watch
Was hindered by the weakness of the flesh.
He bade them now arise, because the one
Who should betray him was now near at hand.

THE BETRAYAL

No doubt the Master often there had slept,
As he possessed no place to lay his head.
So Judas knew the spot where he would find
The Saviour under heaven's canopy
All studded now with starry eyes, which looked
In wonder on their homeless Maker's grief.

With Judas came a multitude with swords
And other weapons and with lanterns, sent
By the chief priests and scribes, to capture him.
Then he who would betray him gave a sign.
He said, "The one I kiss the same is he.
Be sure to hold, and safely lead him forth!"

He came to Jesus, saying: "Master, hail!"
And kissed him. Then the Saviour said to him,
"Betrayest thou thy Master with a kiss?"
Then Peter, little skilled in warfare, drew
His sword, and smote the high priest's servant's ear;
But Jesus with a touch restored the same.

And thus he manifested to them all
His healing power, gentleness and love.
Then said he to the priests and temple guard:
"With weapons have ye come against a thief?
Ye stretched no hand against me as I taught
The people daily in the temple court."

"The hour of darkness is your favored time.
Believe ye I could not this moment pray
My Father, who would presently bestow
More than twelve legions from his shining host
To guard me? But how then could be fulfilled
The things the Scriptures say concerning me?"

He then permitted them to bind his arms,
And lead him first to Annas, the high priest.
When he was taken, all forsook their Lord;
Though Peter at a distance followed him,
And John who loved him was not far away.
The latter was admitted to the court.

Then Peter came, and stood without the gate.
John, knowing this, went out and brought him in
To strong temptation, where he met his fall.
The girl who kept the portal said to him:
"You must be one of his disciples." But
At once he answered, saying: "I am not."

EXAMINATION BEFORE ANNAS

The high priest questioned Jesus of his band
And doctrine, but the Saviour answered him:
"I in the temple and the synagogues
Have taught the people openly, and ne'er
In secret gave instruction. Why of me
Inquire? Let those who heard be witnesses."

An officer with open hand then struck
The Saviour on the mouth, with this remark:
"Dost thou to the high priest make such reply?"
The Master quietly made this response:
"If I have spoken evil, testify
To it; if well, why hast thou smitten me?"

TRIAL BEFORE CAIAPHAS

Then to Caiaphas Annas sent him bound.
There Peter with the enemies of Christ
Endeavored by the fire to warm himself.
One of them said to him, "You are of them,
For by your speech you are of Galilee."
Then answered Peter, "Man, I know him not."

About an hour thereafter one of them—
Who almost lost an ear by Peter's sword—
Accosted him, and said: "Did not I see
Thee in the garden with him?" Then again
Poor Peter with an oath denied his Lord.
Just then he heard the crowing of a cock.

This called to mind how Jesus had declared:
"Before the cock shall crow, thou wilt three times
Deny me." Then the Saviour turned on him
A look his follower could ne'er forget.
Then from the place of trial Peter fled,
While down his cheeks the tears of sorrow ran.

Meanwhile the court examined witnesses.
At last two testified they heard him say,
That he the temple could destroy, and build
It up again in space of three short days.
The high priest then arose, and said to him:
"Hast thou no answer for these witnesses?"

But Jesus held his peace, and answered not.
Then said the high priest: "I adjure thee now,
To tell us by the living God, if thou
Art truly Christ, the Son of God or not?"
To such a question he must make reply.
The Saviour answered, "It is as you say."

"Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man
Exalted on the throne of majesty
At God's right hand, and coming in the clouds."
The high priest rent his clothes, remarking that,
"They had no need of other witnesses,
As all of them had heard his blasphemy."

"What think ye?" asked Caiaphas of the court,
They answered, "Death should be the penalty."
Then in their rage they spat upon our Lord,
And bound his eyes, and smote him with their hands,
And bade him prove his gift of prophecy,
By telling who had thus insulted him.

JUDAS REPENTS

When Judas saw that Christ had been condemned,
He brought the price for which he sold his Lord
(The thirty silver pieces) to the priests
And elders, saying: "I have sinned in that
I have betrayed the innocent!" They said,
"That is not our affair. See thou to that!"

He dashed the cursëd money to the floor,
And in remorse went out and hanged himself.
The chief priests took the silver, saying that
It was the price of blood, and should not go
Into the treasury. And so they bought
With it a field to bury strangers in.

TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

When daylight came they led the Saviour forth
To Pilate's judgment seat, that he might there
Be doomed to die upon the shameful cross.
They would not go into the hall, for fear
Of the defilement that would come to them
From entering a Gentile residence.

They feared defilement, while they planned to slay
The Son of God, and do a hellish deed
Unequaled for its baseness in all time.
The Roman governor went out to them,
And asked: "What accusation do ye bring
Against this prisoner?" They answered him:

"If he were not a malefactor, we
Would not have brought him to thy judgment seat."
Then Pilate answered, "Take, and judge ye him
According to your law." The Jews replied,
"We have no right to put a man to death."
This was that Jesus' words might be fulfilled.

As Jesus stood before the governor,
He questioned him: "Art thou the Jewish king?"
The Master answered, "It is as you say."
But when the chief of priests and elders, too,
Accused the Saviour, he made no reply.
The governor was much surprised at this.

So Pilate asked him if he did not hear
How many charges they against him brought.
But like a sheep before the shearers dumb
Was Jesus, never answering a word.
It was the custom of the governor
At Passover, to liberate some man.

Barabbas was in prison at that time,
He was the leader of a robber band,
Who in an insurrection murder wrought.
Then Pilate asked, "Which one shall I release,
Barabbas or this Jesus called the Christ?"
He knew the latter innocent of crime.

About this time word came from Pilate's wife,
To warn him to be careful in this case,
And pass no judgment on this righteous man;
For she had suffered greatly in a dream
Because of him that night. On hearing this
He tried the harder to deliver him.

But to his question, "Whom shall I release?"
They at the instigation of the priests
Replied: "Barabbas." "What then shall I do
With Jesus called the Christ?" he asked of them.
The answer was, "Let him be crucified!"
Then Pilate asked, "What evil hath he done?"

They louder cried, "Let him be crucified!"
The judge affirmed, "I find no fault in him."
They answered, "He from Galilee to here
Through Jewry stirs the people to revolt,
By saying that he is himself a king."
Then Pilate asked, "Is he of Galilee?"

And when he heard he was, he thought at once
To send him unto Herod, who was then
Most opportunely in Jerusalem.
It seemed a happy thought, for thus he would
Avoid passing judgment on the man.
So instantly he carried out this plan.

CHRIST BEFORE HEROD

When Herod saw the Saviour, he was glad,
For he had heard so many things of him,
And hoped to see him work some miracle.
The prisoner before him was so meek,
So different from John the Baptist, whom
He had supposed had risen from the dead.

Though questioned by the king on many points,
The Saviour nothing either said or did.
Then Herod and his soldiers set at naught
The Christ by clothing him in gorgeous robe,
(Some piece of cast-off royal finery)
And having mocked him, sent him back again.

CHRIST AGAIN BEFORE PILATE

That day the governor and Jewish king
Were reconciled, though enemies before.
Then Pilate having called the priests and scribes
And rulers of the people, said to them:
"Ye brought this man as one that stirreth up
The people, but I find no fault in him."

"King Herod, who examined him as well,
Could find no cause why he should suffer death:
I therefore will chastise and let him go."
Then Roman soldiers scourged our blessëd Lord,
Arrayed him in a purple robe of state,
And placed a crown of thorns upon his head.

They put a reed for sceptre in his hand,
And bowed the knee before him, crying: "Hail!"
They struck him with the reed and with their hands.
Then Jesus wearing still the purple gown
And crown of thorns, with Pilate faced the crowd,
Then said the governor, "Behold the man!"

They were not softened by the sight, but cried
With all their might: "Let him be crucified!"
"What! Shall I crucify your king?" he asked.
"We have no king but Caesar!" they replied.
Then Pilate taking water, washed his hands,
To show his guiltlessness of Jesus' blood.

"On us and on our children be his blood!"
The people cried. And so they had their wish.
Barabbas was soon set at liberty,
While Jesus worn and weak from suffering,
Was made to bear the heavy wooden cross,
Until he fainting fell beneath his load.

Then Simon, a Cyrenian was forced
To take the cross and bear it after Christ.
While some were there with hearts of stone, who cried:
"Away with him!" The women pity showed,
And wept aloud. But Jesus turned to them
And said: "O daughters of Jerusalem,

"For me refrain your tears; but for yourselves
And for your children weep! The time will come
When to be childless will a blessing be.
For if they do these things in the green tree,
What shall be done in the dry sapless one?"
So saying they passed out the city gate.

JESUS CRUCIFIED

The Saviour was conducted to a mound
Golgotha called or Calvary, because
It was in outline like a human skull.
'Twas there they crucified our blessëd Lord;
And as they drove the nails, he prayed: "Forgive
Them Father, for they know not what they do!"

On either side of him they crucified
A thief, in order to humiliate
Him more, not knowing that they thus fulfilled
A prophecy, that he should numbered be
With the transgressors. Pilate wrote a sign,
And put it on the cross above his head.

The accusation was to this effect:
"This is the Jewish king from Nazareth."
The Jews not liking this, made the request,
That he should change the wording of the same,
That it should read: "He said that he was king."
But Pilate this time would not yield to them.

But nine o'clock, before his friends could know,
And come to his assistance, they had tried,
Condemned, and led our blessëd Lord to death.
Assistance! Was he not the Son of God,
Who with a word could slay his enemies?
He willingly laid down his life for us.

The people in their mad derision, said:
"He rescued others, let him save himself!
If thou be Christ, the king of Israel,
The chosen one of God, the cross forsake!"
They tempted him by saying, "Save thyself!
Descend, and we will then believe in thee!"

One of the thieves derided him as well
By saying, "If thou be indeed the Christ,
And hast the power, save thyself and us!"
The other malefactor answered him:
"Hast thou no fear of God? Our suffering
Is just; but this man hath done naught amiss!"

And then he cried, "O Lord, remember me
When thou dost into thine own kingdom come!"
The Saviour answered him, "This day shalt thou
Keep company with me in paradise."
Beside the cross his weeping mother stood;
And near her John, whom he so dearly loved.

He to his mother said, "Behold thy son!"
And then to John, "Upon thy mother look!"
While hanging in his dreadful agony,
He planned for her who loved him all his life,
That she should have his loved disciple's care;
For from that hour John took her to his home.

When midday came, it should have been most light;
Instead of this an awful darkness fell
Upon the earth. For e'en the very sun
Could not endure to see his Maker die,
But hid his face behind a mantle dark
Until the dreadful scene was at an end.

For three long hours the darkness wrapped the earth,
Then from a deeper gloom the Saviour cried:
"My God! Oh why hast thou forsaken me?"
To be forsaken of his Father, God,
Because he bore the sins of all the world,
Was bitterest of all his bitter cup.

Then Jesus cried, "I thirst!" And one of them
More sympathetic than the others took
A sponge, and dipped it in the soldier's wine,
And put it on a reed, and raised it up
Until it touched the Saviour's parchëd lips,
And having tasted it, he cried again:

"'Tis finished!" Then once more he called aloud:
"My Father, into thy hands I commit
My spirit!" Then he bowed his head, and died.
With his last cry the earth's foundation shook.
Some graves released their dead. The temple veil
Was from the top to bottom rent in twain.

When the centurian who had in charge
This fearful piece of work beheld these things,
He said: "This truly was the Son of God."
They crushed the limbs of those on either side
Of Jesus, but they did not break his bones,
Fulfilling thus another prophecy.

But one of them, a cruel soldier, took
His spear, and pierced our dear Redeemer's side,
That all might be assured that he was dead;
Then from the wound the blood and water flowed,
A cleansing stream to purify the earth,
And wash away the guilt from many souls.

JOSEPH AND NICODEMUS BURY JESUS

A counselor named Joseph, just and good,
And secretly the Master's follower,
Of Pilate begged the body of our Lord.
Then Nicodemus also showed his love
By bringing spices, and with his own hands
Assisting in the burial of Christ.

A hundred pounds of fragrant myrrh and balm
With finest linen soon embraced the form
So dearly loved. When their sad task was done,
They laid their precious burden in a tomb
Possessed by Joseph in a garden near,
Which had as yet received no occupant.

A mighty stone was rolled against the door,
And all was done before the Sabbath day,
Which for the Jews began at set of sun
On Friday evening. But his enemies
Recalled to mind how he had said to them,
That he on the third day would rise again.

So some of them to Pilate bent their way,
To tell him of the Saviour's prophecy,
And beg him guard the sepulchre with care,
For fear lest some of his disciples try
To steal their teacher's body from the tomb,
And say that he had risen from the dead.

Then Pilate's seal was set upon the tomb,
And sixteen Roman soldiers placed on guard
About the sepulchre to make it sure.
We thank them for this care, for in this way
They added greatly to the proof that Christ
Arose as he had said that he would do.

Before the sun went down, with heavy hearts
The loyal friends of Jesus passed within
The city gates, to keep the Sabbath day
According to their customs; but to those
Whose hopes now seemed defeated came no peace,
Because their Master had been crucified.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The Sabbath o'er, the women showed their love,
Preparing spices through the hours of night,
That they with the first sign of coming day
Might bear them to his rock-hewn sepulchre,
To there perform again with greater care
The hasty work of Friday afternoon.

But e'er they reached the tomb an angel bright
With countenance like lightning and with robe
Of snowy whiteness came, and rolled away
The massive stone that blocked the cavern's door.
No need of this to let the Saviour out,
But only to reveal the empty grave.

The Roman soldiers, hardy men and brave,
In presence of the angel lost their strength,
And trembled like the feeble aspen leaves.
They fled, and sought the city, where they told
The priests what they had seen; but they were bribed
To say his friends had stolen him away.

The women came. They were the first to reach
His tomb, as they were last to leave his cross.
When Mary Magdalene on coming near
Beheld the open door, and saw within
But darkness and no sign of him she loved,
She feared that someone had removed her Lord.

She hastened back to Peter and to John
To tell them of her fears concerning him.
Meanwhile her women friends went in the tomb,
And saw two shining ones who said to them:
"Why for the living seek among the dead?
He is not here, but risen as he said."

"Remember how in Galilee he spoke,
And told you that the Son of man must be
Delivered to the hands of sinful men,
And crucified, and three days after rise?"
When thus reminded, they recalled his words,
And hastened to inform his followers.

As they were going, hasty steps were heard
Of John and Peter running to the grave.
Too swift were they for Mary Magdalene
Who followed in the distance. John was first
To reach the sepulchre, and look within;
But Peter being bolder entered it.

Then John went in as well, and saw the clothes
In such a shape that he became convinced
That his dear Lord had risen from the dead.
Their stay was short, for fearing enemies,
They to their city lodging soon returned;
But Mary Magdalene still lingered there.

She wept, and stooping, gazed within the tomb,
And saw what John and Peter had not seen,
Two angels sitting at the head and foot
Of where the Saviour's body had reposed.
They asked her whom she sought, and why she wept.
She said, "Because my Lord is borne away."

She, turning, saw the Master standing near,
But blinded by her tears, she did not know
That it was Jesus; but supposing him
To be the one who for the garden cared,
She thought he might know something of her Lord.
He asked her why she wept, and whom she sought.

She answered, "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence,
Inform me kindly where he now is laid;
And I will take him to another place."
A voice that thrilled her, called her by her name,
Her eyes were opened, and she knew her Lord.
She cried, "Rabboni!" falling at his feet.

Then Jesus said to Mary, "Touch me not!
For to my Father I have not yet gone;
But hasten to my followers, and say,
That to my Father and to yours I go,
Ascending to my God and yours as well."
Then Mary came, and told them all these things.

THE WALK TO EMMAUS

As to a village seven miles away
That very afternoon two friends of Christ
Were slowly walking, talking of their hopes
So lately shattered by the Master's death,
The Christ himself approached them, but their eyes
Were holden, so they recognized him not.

He walked with them, and asked them what it was
They talked about, that made them seem so sad.
Then one of them made this reply to him:
"Art thou a stranger in Jerusalem,
And knowest not the things there lately done?"
To draw him out, the Saviour asked: "What things?"

They said, "Concerning one of Nazareth,
The prophet Jesus mighty in his words
And deeds before the people and our God;
Whom we believed to be the promised one,
Who should redeem our nation, Israel.
But he was slain by those who govern us."

"The third day since these things were done is this.
Some women also of our company,
Who early visited his sepulchre,
But found him not, returned and said to us,
That they had seen some angels in his tomb,
Who told them that the Master was alive."

Then answered Jesus, saying: "Foolish ones,
And slow of heart to hear the prophet's words,
Ought not the Christ to suffer all these things,
And enter into glory?" Then began
He to explain in all the Scriptures, that
Which had been written there concerning him.

As they approached the village, Christ appeared
As though he would continue further on.
(He did this probably to test their love.)
But they constrained him, saying: "Stay with us!
For it is now approaching eventide,
The day already being nearly spent."

Thus urged, the Master yielded to their wish,
And with his presence graced their humble home;
Then sitting down with them at supper time,
He blessed and brake the bread, and gave to them.
This action so familiar made him known.
He vanished quickly from their opened eyes.

They said, "Did not our heart within us burn
While by the way the Lord conversed with us,
And opened up the Scriptures to our minds?"
They waited not for morning, but at once
Retraced their steps back to Jerusalem,
To tell the others their experience.

CHRIST APPEARS TO THE TWELVE

They found the Master's faithful followers
Assembled and excited, for they said:
"The Lord has truly risen from the dead,
And hath to Simon Peter shown himself."
Then as the two were speaking of the things
That Jesus did, and how he brake the bread,

The Saviour stood within their very midst,
And greeted them with: "Peace be unto you!"
But they were terrified, supposing that
It was a ghost their eyes were fixed upon.
The Christ assured them, saying: "See my hands.
A spirit does not have such flesh and bones."

He bade them handle him, and be convinced.
He showed to them his wounded hands and feet.
He even ate some food before their eyes,
And said: "These are the things I spoke to you,
Fulfilling what is written in the Law,
The Prophets and the Psalms concerning me."

He opened up the truth before their minds,
And showed that it was needful thus to die,
And on the third day from the dead arise.
Repentance with forgiveness should be preached
In every nation under heaven's dome,
The work beginning at Jerusalem.

CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARANCE TO THE TWELVE

But Thomas was not with them on that night,
So when the others told him they had seen
The Lord, he said: "I will not be convinced
Unless I see the nail prints in his hands,
And thrust my finger in them, and my hand
Within the wound made by the soldier's spear."

The doubter in a few days had his proof;
For when a week had passed, and all again
Assembled, Thomas being now with them,
When doors were barred, for fear of enemies,
Once more the Saviour suddenly appeared,
And with his, "Peace be with you!" greeted them.

He turned to Thomas, saying: "See my hands.
Thy finger hither reach, and feel the scars;
And thrust thy hand here in my wounded side;
And be no longer doubting, but believe."
"My Lord," cried Thomas, adding "and my God!"
He had his proof, and all his doubts were gone.

The Master said, "Because thine eyes have seen,
Thou art convinced; but greater blessing theirs,
Who have not seen, and yet believe on me."
The risen Lord in presence of his band
Did many things the Scriptures have not told,
Which caused them all to fully trust in him.

CHRIST MEETS HIS FOLLOWERS IN GALILEE

Soon after this they went to Galilee,
And in this manner met the Master there.
When Peter and six others all night long
Had dragged the heavy net without success,
As day was breaking, some one on the shore
Accosted them with: "Children have ye meat?"

They answered, "No!" And then came the command:
"Upon the right side cast, and ye shall find!"
They did so, and enclosed so many fish,
That they had not the strength to pull them in.
John cried, "It is the Lord!" Then Peter flung
Himself into the sea, and swam to him.

The others with the boat and laden net
Approached the shore more slowly, seeing there
Some glowing coals with fish upon them laid;
And there was bread as well. The net was drawn,
Which to the great surprise of all contained
One hundred three and fifty captured fish.

The Master then invited them to dine.
Not one of them dared ask him who he was,
Because they knew full well he was the Lord.
The Saviour gave to them the fish and bread;
And John informs us this appearance was
The third vouchsafed them as a company.

Then having eaten with their risen Lord,
He said to Peter: "Simon, Jonas' son,
Is thy affection for me more than these?"
But Peter's confidence in self was gone.
He simply said, "Thou knowest, Lord, my love."
Then said the Saviour to him, "Feed my lambs!"

The Master then of Peter asked again
The searching question he had asked before,
Omitting the expression, "More than these."
He answered him, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that
I love thee." Jesus answered, "Feed my sheep!"
'Twas thus Christ bade him prove his love for him.

Again the third time Jesus probed the heart
Of Peter, asking of his love for him.
And this recalled to Simon how three times
He had denied his Master. So he cried
In sorrow: "Lord, thou knowest everything,
And therefore thou must know my love for thee!"

"Then feed my sheep!" the Master said to him.
The Saviour told him that in future he
Would faithful prove until the end of life,
And glorify his Master by his death;
For other hands should guide him in old age,
And lead him into paths he would not choose.

Then Peter wished to know what John should do.
The Saviour answered, "If it is my will
That he should tarry till I come again,
That would be of no consequence to thee.
Your Master follow!" Some of them inferred
That John would live till Jesus should return.

THE ASCENSION

Then after that Christ in Jerusalem
Appeared to them, and taught them many things;
And during forty days was often seen.
He sent them as he had himself been sent
To preach the gospel under every sky,
And be his witnesses to all mankind.

"But tarry," said he, "in Jerusalem
Until ye shall have power from on high."
He led them out as far as Bethany,
(The spot which seemed most loved of him on earth,)
And lifting up the hands that bore the scars,
He left them, showering blessings on their heads.

Ascending, soon a cloud their view obscured.
They strained their eyes to catch a parting glimpse;
While so engaged, two angels clad in white
Had come unseen, and close beside them stood.
They asked the question: "Galileeans, why
Gaze ye so earnestly into the sky?"

"This Jesus, who has just been taken up,
Shall come again, as ye have seen him go."
Returning to Jerusalem with joy,
They spent the days in prayer and in praise,
While waiting for the Spirit from above,
To fit them to be witnesses for Christ.

Thus ends the story of the perfect life.
He lived to show us how we ought to live.
He ever lives within his followers,
Revealing through them something of himself,
Imperfectly, of course, as turbid streams
Reflect the image of the midday sun.

THE END.

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